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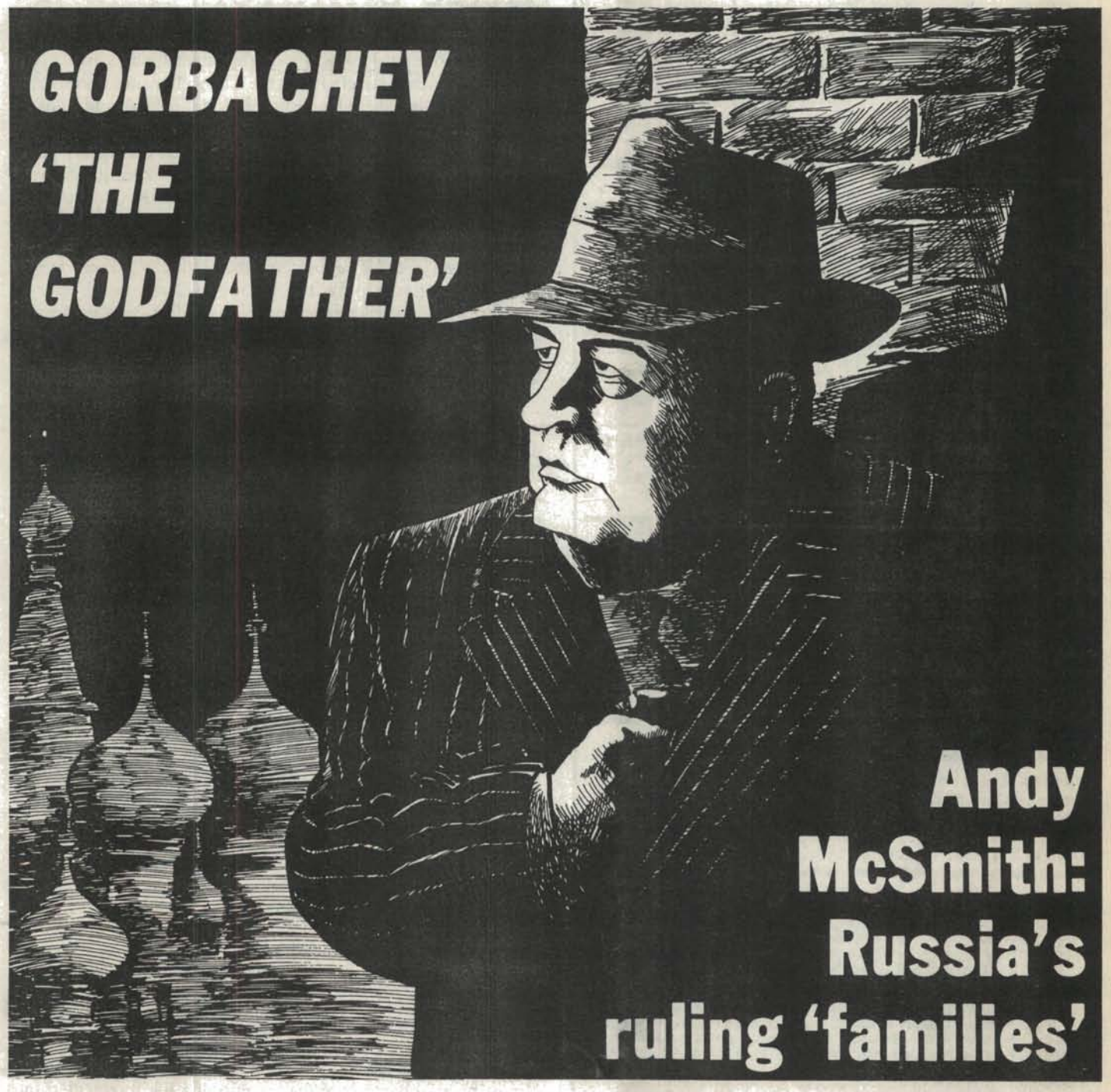

GORBACHEV 'THE GODFATHER'

Andy McSmith: Russia's ruling 'families'

MICK JOHNSON: CP hangs on to Scargill's coat tails

BERNARD GREAVES: Liberals choked by the SDP

MANDY MERCK: Wimbledon's off-court dramas

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New Statesman

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New Statesman

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Now they'll tax little children

THERE IS one particular clause in this year's Finance Bill (which gives retrospective effect to what the Chancellor announced in the Budget in the Spring) that reveals the hypocrisy and muddle of the Thatcher government's thinking. It is the clause that would tax as a 'perk' the provision by employers of nurseries in the work place. This week the government opposed an amendment put forward by Labour that would have prevented the Inland Revenue treating the cost of providing for a nursery as part of a parent's income (like, say, having a company car) and taxing it accordingly.

The first level of hypocrisy and muddle relates to the Thatcherite attitude to the family. Current Conservative policy is full of rhetoric about the importance of the family, of preserving or restoring traditional family 'values'. Yet the government (and indeed the Tory Party itself) seemingly has no coherent view as to how this rhetoric translates into actual policy.

Thus Tories are totally divided, amongst other things, on their attitude to the 'Gillick ruling', which would seek to prevent doctors prescribing contraceptives to girls under 16; on *in vitro* fertilisation; on surrogate mothering; on the desirability of mothers working; on divorce — indeed on virtually anything you care to mention that relates to the realities and problems of family or non-family life in 1985.

There is no attempt to square the explicit assumption that the 'traditional' family is the desired social unit either with the fact that the growing majority of British citizens do not live in such units or with Thatcherism's other explicit assumption of policy, namely that market forces should be given a free run and that the labour market should be more flexible.

Unless modern Toryism is prepared to go all the way and declare that women are not an integral but only a marginal part of its model for a more free market in labour (which for obvious political reasons it will not do), the argument that the labour market (ie actual working women and men) needs to be more flexible implies inevitably that the traditional family unit will have to be more flexible.

It is divorced from reality to persist in speaking of the family, as many Tories do, as if its norm was based on one parent bringing home a decent and secure wage or salary and the other parent running the home and providing the decent and secure base for the home and school life of children. Quite apart from movement towards equality of opportunity for the sexes in employment, to make ends meet at all most households with children in this country could not maintain such a pattern of the traditional Victorian bourgeois family, even if they wanted to.

The consequences fall mainly on women, for it is they who almost invariably take the main strain of a life fragmented into many parts — employment and career, housekeeping and child-rearing. The development of nursery provision at the work place would seem to be a wholly desirable development, designed to make some minimum contribution to increasing the flexibility of the workforce that the government claims to want. But now, instead of allowing the practice to expand (let alone actively encouraging it), the government has gone the other way. It is using fiscal policy actively to discourage it.

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There is a second level of hypocrisy and muddle involved. The justification for the change in tax treatment being put forward by the government is that the free provision of nursery facilities is a 'perk' like any other — and should be taxed accordingly. In the first place it is not true that all perks are taxed. Subsidised staff canteens, or lavishly free directors dining facilities, are a perk and are not taxed at all. The use of a company box at Ascot, or company seats at Covent Garden does not fall int the tax inspector's net, even if regular.

It is true that those with company cars of their own get taxed, though not those who manage to use chauffeur driven company cars out of office hours for private purposes. But even here the argument is hypocritical. For those with company cars are only assessed by the Inland Revenue on a nominal amount of imputed extra income — always a fraction of the true value of the perk to the receiver if it had to be paid for personally. Yet the government proposal on taxing the 'perk' of having a nursery place provided is that individual parents should be taxed on the *whole* of the real cost of providing that place.

Since in the majority of cases employers are only providing nursery facilities out of enlightened self-interest, in order to get or retain flexible staff of the quality that they want, it is astonishing to find the government making their lives more difficult.

It is less astonishing to find that when this government brings some minor assistance to working mothers or working single parents in the tax net, it then decides to subject them to a tax regime substantially more harsh that that which applies to the taxation of those who are already in most cases much better off — less surprising only because that has been the consistent record of this government since it was elected in 1979. □

Try finding actual culprits

THIS GOVERNMENT is establishing a first in its relations with the Press. By deciding to proceed with the prosecution of the *Observer* because of the money that was handed over to ex-Ministry of Defence civil servant Ray Williams in connection with scandalous information about defence contracts, it will be deploying the 1906 Prevention of Corruption Act against a newspaper for the first time.

The threat of prosecution has been allowed to hang over the *Observer* ever since charges were brought against Williams. The (deliberate?) result has been to place the *Observer* in an impossible position. The suggestion that the newspaper behaved either corruptly in inducing Williams to part with information, or at least that it behaved with lower than desirable standards, was presented by both the prosecution and the defence in the Williams trial, which ended with Williams getting six months in January.

Yet the *Observer*'s side of the story was never put, for neither side chose to call the *Observer* as a witness. Yet while the trial was on, since the matter was *sub judice* the paper could not respond. Since January the same *sub judice* considerations, this time because the paper itself is being prosecuted, have left the accusations uncontested on the record.

At least when its trial comes the *Observer* will be able to speak about those events on the record. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to speculate here and now about the rights and wrongs of the way in which some money passed from the *Observer* to Williams. It is worth recording, though, that a great deal of cant is uttered about 'cheque book journalism'.

Huge sums of money — not just the several hundreds of pounds that Williams seems to have taken — are paid out by newspapers to prominent people for stories that break the Official Secrets Act, or involve breaches of contract and confidence with employers and colleagues, past and present — and such payments are regarded as laudable publishing coups.

The substantive issue of whether the *Observer* corruptly induced Williams to sell his material has yet to be settled. If the court finds that it did not, then one court will have found Williams guilty of accepting a corrupt inducement which another court will have found not to have been offered. This alone creates a strong element of prejudice against the *Observer* in its case, which would not and should not have been there if the Attorney General had proceeded correctly and brought the original action against Williams and the newspaper together.

The real scandal of the way in which the government has handled the case, though, lies elsewhere. It went for Williams. It is now going for the *Observer*. But what is it doing about the facts that Williams and the *Observer* performed a public service by revealing? These were that the Ministry of Defence was a 'black hole' down which taxpayers' money was being poured and that this was systematically concealed from the government's auditors and from Parliament. What has the government done by way of bringing to account those responsible for these massive defence contracting scandals and for the cover-up? Answer: nothing. □

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DOUNREAY'S SHORE IS HOTTER THAN ADMITTED

RADIOACTIVE POLLUTION of the foreshore at the Dounreay nuclear plant on the north coast of Scotland has been considerably more serious than the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) has previously suggested. Some of the radioactive particles discovered around 18 months ago are comparable to the contamination from the Sellafield nuclear plant in Cumbria which led to the public being barred from nearby beaches. ROB EDWARDS reports

UKAEA

Testing times, Mr Blumfield

INTERNAL minutes of meetings between Dounreay trade unionists and management — which have been passed to the *New Statesman* — reveal worryingly high levels of radiation. One particle found on the enclosed foreshore was emitting radiation that was 25 times the level at which the government advised people not to use the Sellafield beaches and about 50,000 times the natural background level.

The existence of pollution was publicly announced by the Dounreay director Clifford Blumfield in March 1984 — four months after the discovery of the first particle. His statement followed fierce controversy over the Sellafield contamination and came just a month after the Orkney anti-nuclear group, The Dunters, had announced that they were commissioning an independent radiological survey of the Orcadian coast close to Dounreay.

Blumfield said that the first particle had been found in November 1983 'during routine monitoring'. An unspecified number of further 'small radioactive spots' were subsequently uncovered but levels of radioactivity were, he insisted, 'very, very low' and there was no danger to members of staff or the public. He didn't quote any precise measurements but felt able to reassure the press that this was definitely not a 'Sellafield situation'.

The leaked minutes suggest otherwise. The first particle is described as having a level of activity 'estimated at 15 millicuries'. Independent experts regard this reading as dangerously high, pointing out that the procedures for dealing with materials emitting similar levels of radiation are subject to special government regulations.

But at a meeting on 23 December 1983, management representative, Mr J. G. Walford, did his best to assure the trade unions that all was well:

> Handling such a particle for a brief spell, for example while playing on a beach, while undesirable, would be unlikely to lead to an annual dose limit being exceeded. Ingestion would be harmful, but the chances of it occuring were infinitesimal and very much less than, say, the risk of inadvertently taking a harmful medicine.

'Do more tests'

Worried trade unionists pressed for increased monitoring, but this was initially resisted by management. Ever wary of public relations, Walford pointed out that:

> The benefits of extra monitoring had to be weighed against the possibility of public concern being generated by the sight of a lot of additional monitoring going on.

The second particle discovered on 6 January 1984 is said to have measured half a millicurie and to have been emitting 'about 250 millirads per hour gamma at two inches'. The level of natural background radiation expected in sand is about 5 thousandths of a millirad per hour gamma. After the Sellafield spillage, the official watchdog, the National Radiological Protection Board, recommended that the public should avoid nearby beaches for as long as materials in excess of 10 millirads per hour beta/gamma were being found there.

The finding of the second particle caused management to agree to the trade union request for extra monitoring. The enclosed Dounreay foreshore would be surveyed 'more thoroughly and more frequently than hitherto using additional monitoring instruments' and monitoring of nearby public beaches would be stepped up.

Enter Scottish Office

The Scottish Office and the local Nuclear Installations Inspectorate were informed about these two particles although they were said to be 'not officially reportable' under the government's special reporting procedures. According to a trade union account of a special meeting on 25 January 1984, the Scottish Office felt that their discovery was a 'fairly serious occurance, not because of activity, but because it showed a "lack of control".'

At this and a later meeting trade unionists were informed that a further 31 particles had been found scattered round the foreshore (one of them measuring a millicurie and another one tenth of a millicurie). This contrasts with the assurance given by management after the finding of the first particle that there was 'virtually no chance' of uncovering any more.

Some of the particles were publicly said by Dounreay to be twenty-year old uranium fuel from the Dounreay Materials Test Reactor. They were thought to have leaked from a broken pipe in 1965 and to have been deposited at the base of a cliff until they were exposed by storms.

Source in shaft?

But according to one of the leaked minutes, the Scottish Office had a different theory, arguing that the particles had been dislodged during handling in the 'Highly Active Shaft' or expelled by the 'minor explosion' in that shaft in 1977. The rest of the particles were believed to be waste products which were distributed when the sand blocking a low-level radioactive discharge pipeline was removed.

From the information available the Dounreay pollution appears to have been less widespread than that which afflicted the Sellafield beaches and resulted in the current prosecution of the plant's operators, British Nuclear Fuels plc (BNFL). Existing evidence also indicates that the disturbingly high doses of radiation were confined to the Dounreay foreshore where the public do not normally have access.

Nevertheless the revelation that the levels of radioactivity at Dounreay were similar to those around Sellafield could damage Dounreay's carefully cultivated holier-than thou image. ●

CORE call it 'a warning'

SINCE the UKAEA and BNFL applied for planning permission last month to build a major new European plutonium fuel reprocessing plant at the Dounreay site, Dounreay's senior representatives have constantly claimed that the plant's safety record has been excellent and bears no comparison with events at Sellafield.

The Scottish Secretary George Younger is expected to make an announcement soon about the public local inquiry due to be held into the planning application.

Jean Emery from CORE (Cumbrians Opposed to a Radioactive Environment) describes the leaked information — *main story this page* — as a warning to the people of Caithness and Orkney. 'There's no doubt about it', she declares, 'if BNFL go up there and build this new reprocessing plant, things will get much worse.'

Dounreay's spokesperson was unable to make any comment on the leaked documents before we went to press. ●

'Alconbury 9' — results

THE TRIAL of the 'Alconbury 9' on charges of conspiracy to commit criminal damage — they are still called the '9' though charges against two were dropped at committal hearing — lurched to an inconclusive end at Northampton crown court on 5 July.

After being out for over two days the jury returned guilty verdicts on Phil Hudson, Paul Rudolph, Sybilla Snake, Roger Oakley and Paul Briggs on Thursday afternoon (4 July), acquitted Corrie McUath on Friday morning and remained divided on Veronica Dignam who now faces a re-trial in Peterborough in two weeks.

The trial itself lasted for over three weeks, with the prosecution presenting long and involved evidence relating to actions at USAF Alconbury and USAF Molesworth (soon to be Britain's second cruise missile base). Central to the case for the prosecution were the peace camp's diary and the visitors book, which they argued showed evidence of intent to commit criminal damage. The defence argued the diary represented the random jottings of a cheerfully anarchic collection of people who weren't working in unison.

Considering the gravity of the charges, sentences were comparatively light. None of the five convicted received custodial sentences. Hudson and Rudolph were given suspended sentences, bound over the keep the peace and fined; the other three were all bound over and given hefty community service orders.

However, the very fact that they were tried for *conspiracy* to commit criminal damage suggests the possibility of a new tactic in police strategy against 'direct action' protestors.

Polly Woolley

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Questions on the JMB affair

A FULL Parliamentary inquiry into the Johnson Matthey Bank (JMB) fiasco is the last thing that the traditionally secretive Bank of England (which prides itself on its distance from Parliamentary scrutiny) could want. Opposition MPs, Hattersley included, are keen however that Bank officials be brought publicly to book for the rescue of JMB. Here we offer them a few tips on Bank weak spots that have not been covered elsewhere in the press.

● QUESTION the Bank closely on the links between the JMB rescue and the state of Midland's finances. If JMB had to be rescued to prevent the collapse of Midland, as the Bank has been hinting to the press in recent weeks, why was it that a Bank team only went through Midland's loan book in January 1985 — some months after the JMB rescue?

● PRESS officials as to why no estimate was made of the cost of letting JMB go under, prior to its public rescue. JMB's deposits were substantial (£614 million in March 1984), and no attempt was made by the Bank to find out how many of these deposits were effectively insured against a bank failure by the Deposit Protection Scheme — funded by all UK banks, this ensures that 75 per cent of any individual deposit up to a value of £10,000 is recoverable in the event of a bank collapse.

● ENSURE that Bank officials understand that £200 million must be obtained from the sale of JMB and action against JMB accountants Arthur Young, if they are to recoup all monies they have spent on JMB. This sum covers the £100 million deposit, first revealed in the *New Statesman* on 21 December last year (now JMB capital), the £30 million of tax relief granted to the banks for agreeing to share JMB's losses, and the £68 million they and the Bank will have to pay to JMB under this arrangement — it's unlikely that the banks would let the Bank get its money back, without wanting theirs too.

● DISREGARD Dennis Skinner's recent statement that the decision to rescue JMB was influenced by Mrs Thatcher's personal relationship with a major JMB creditor whom he did not name. Mr Abdul Shamji, the creditor in question, is an associate of both the PM and Norman Tebbit, and has borrowed substantial sums from JMB (£20 million according to the latest estimates).

However, his borrowings are unlikely to have contributed to JMB's demise. They are dwarfed by the £100 million or so lent by JMB to fellow Asian entrepreneurs Ranjit Sethia and Mahmoud Sipra. And whereas Shamji's loans still appear good (though a charge was placed by JMB on two of his companies in January of this year), it was the £100 million lent to Sipra and Sethia that killed JMB when it had to be written off following the collapse of both men's companies.

Duncan Campbell

Oh ho! A 2nd Grunwick?

A STRIKE at a Glasgow furniture factory over trade union recognition could, locals believe, be poised to escalate into a dispute of Grunwick proportions.

Seven weeks ago, on 25 May, 35 members of the Furniture Timber and Allied Trades Union (FTAT) walked out of H. Morris Ltd demanding union recognition and the implementation of a 30-hour week to comply with a national agreement. The company, which is now under the management of 29-year-old Robert Morris, a flamboyant advocate of free-enterprise, reacted by sacking all the striker.

Although H. Morris Ltd is leading contributor to the Scottish Furnishing Manufacturers Association, Morris has bluntly stated: 'This firm does not recognise the national agreement. These people have been sacked. There'll be no negotiation.'

A mass picket last week attracted support from amongst others, workers at Govan shipbuilders and Yarrows. FTAT West of Scotland organiser Bob McCallum says: 'This man Morris has thrown down the gauntlet to the trade union movement in the West of Scotland'.

Graham Ogilvie

MISCELLANY

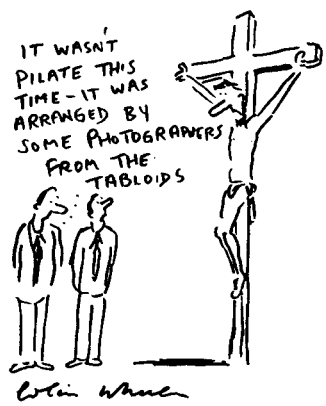
Gee, thanks Minister

'Appallingly insensitive' were the words Simon Hughes, MP Lib for Bermondsey, was using, stomping round the Commons this Tuesday after a lobby by wheelchaired disabled. They were trying to press the merits of Dial-a-Ride buses on transport secretary Nicholas Ridley and he, if Hughes is to be believed, said of London's existing transport — which generally requires the traveller to be not merely able-bodied, but a fledging gymnast — *'it can't be that bad because, look, you're all here'*. Just like that (aprocryphal?) Chancellor of the Exchequer who said to a meeting of the unemployed, 'Well I don't know about you, but I must be off, I've got work to do'.

Acrimony-nyms

Elsewhere in the corridors of powerlessness (why is everybody rushing to become an MP? We ought to be told) the despondent moan wherever any two Labour cronies are gathered together is: 'One damn thing after another: if it isn't TBW it's TWB'. If you haven't heard it, kindly stand on your head.

That Bloody Woman, ahem or, ahem, Tony Wedgwood Benn.



Wrong disciples

Spurred on by another encyclical from Holland (this one dated 1 July) imploring us to believe that Christ is back and living in London — you've probably read stray mentions of this phenomenon — it occurred to us to ask why *journalists* are supposed to care. One Benjamin Creme, an East Ender, is alleging that 'Maitreya the Christ' is here in the smoke readying himself (it's always a *him*self) for a mission as 'World Teacher for all humanity'. The other current principal contender for Christ, Ali Mehmet Aga, on trial as would-be assassin of the Pope, has generated his own unfortunate publicity without circular letters. Back comes the answer from the London claimant's supporters: 'The involvement of a lot of tough-minded journalists would provide definite proof of Mr Creme's claim'. Well, yes. But even after 2000 years, most hacks don't yet believe in the *first* Christ.

Subliminal cartoon

From Jane *in that elephants graveyard, the* Mirror*'s strip-cartoon page. Dateline 3 July. Hasn't the* Mirror publisher just bought into Sinclair?

Yes, you can't

Facts are facts, even when people are out from the count. Labour's B & R candidate on the 4th, Richard Willey, serves as an Independent councillor in Radnor, and as the publicity tide recedes, that's been getting up people's noses. Remember how Cosmas Desmond was effectively forced off Tower Hamlets council last year when he said he wouldn't stay a member of a Labour group which sanctioned links with South African connection firms — and was told by Labour national agent that he couldn't be a party member *and* a non-aligned councillor? He resigned, keeping his party-card. Rulings please, Larry Whitty.

We tell you a secret

Cheering news for those on the Left who feared the body politic had become hopelessly decadent, its spine gnawed away by anxieties on, well, what does it mean *to be a socialist these days. Marxism is alive, thrusting, and this week camped out at London's University of London Union, under the stern guardianship of the Socialist Workers Party (prop. Tony Cliff.) By last Friday when eight days of open debate and discussion kicked off, 3000 people had registered, mostly young and mostly members of the SWP. Although the SWP, once the International Socialists, has been claiming 4-5000 members for the last few years, organisers say the whole outfit has been revived by the miners' strike. The place was too packed on Friday night for* Miscellany *to get into Tony Cliff's 'keynote' address. But ex-members of IS will be glad to know he still peppers his orations with 'I tell you straight' and 'I tell you a secret', while the discussion on rape and pornography was preoccupied with getting people on demos and raising the issue in the workplace.*

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Now that a rate's been set ...

DOING THE LAMBETH TIGHT-ROPE

BY SETTING A RATE last week, Lambeth's councillors appear to have got the worst of both worlds. They delayed doing so just long enough to ensure they incurred the wrath of the district auditor, but by passing a budget which seems to involve £7.5million worth of cuts the council is set to face a series of strikes from its workforce. CHRISTIAN WOLMAR reports

HOWEVER, Lambeth leader Ted Knight's political skills — and many of the councillors' faith in them — are such that with more judicious tightrope-walking the councillors may escape all that and end up being this year's local government heroes.

First, the unions. They struck quickly after last Wednesday's setting of the rate, put forward by two rebel Labour councillors and passed, despite the other 31 remaining solidly behind the no-rate line, because one, Mike Bright, had resigned since the last meeting. The NALGO staff who operate the computers refused to send out the rate demands.

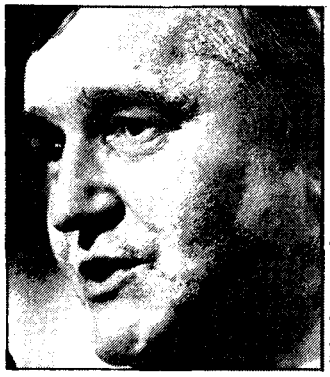
The branch had already agreed a policy two weeks ago of 'all out industrial action' if cuts in jobs and services are implemented. But because the councillors have promised no such cuts, the computer clerks went back to work on Friday.

There, as usual, is the nub. The wizardry of local government finance has struck again. Two weeks ago, the deficit between Lambeth's desired budget and the one imposed by the ratecapping limit was halved to £7.5 million thanks to extra housing subsidy and reduced grant penalties. The 'fudge and nudge' option which seemingly had been out of Lambeth's reach may well now be within it, for 1985-6 at any rate, and the government's decision to give Lambeth the extra money is, of course, being claimed as a partial victory by the council.

With the unions still fighting alongside, rather than against, the council, joint union-council monitoring teams have been set up to ensure that no cuts are pushed through by senior management. The ruling Labour group still retains control of all the committees and it hopes that its overall majority of five (including the two rebels) will be restored at the by-election caused by Bright's resignation on 1 August.

Hovering auditor

Then there's the district auditor, who, by an irony that will not be lost on those who remember Clay Cross, goes by the name of Skinner. Last week, he wrote to 32 councillors (including Bright but not the two Labour rebels) stating that they would be receiving notices that losses of £126,947 had been incurred through their failure to set a rate. He hasn't, however, actually started the formal legal procedure which is only triggered beyond the point of no return by the issuing of the formal certificates stating the loss.



John Sturrock/Network

A parfit subtil Knight

The councillors are now supposed to make representations to Skinner on the subject of the alleged losses. The certificates will be issued, if he goes ahead, in two weeks' time, just about when the government will be announcing the list of councils to be ratecapped next year. With Lambeth now having set a rate, Skinner may, however, decide to make a graceful exit.

If he doesn't, the councillors will fight the battle all the way through the courts because a successful action against them will set several important precedents. First, it will establish exactly the date by which a rate has to be set, preventing the future use of the 'no rate' tactic (though for many council leaders that may well be welcome relief after this year's fiasco).

Second, the court will have given sanction to a way of assessing losses caused by councillors, creating a permanent atmosphere of fear in Labour groups across the country. Finally, future decisions protecting jobs and services may well become 'willful misconduct' in councils which are ratecapped or heavily penalised if there is any doubt whether the budget is likely to end up in deficit.

That explains why the councillors' fighting fund to pay for the legal costs has reportedly already reached over £20,000 of its £250,000 target. The Labour Party national executive, the TUC local government committee and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities have all expressed their opposition to the councillors being surcharged.

So Ted Knight, the original protagonist of the 'no rate' strategy, is, so far, winning. Much to the chagrin of the party leadership, even if he is surcharged, it doesn't stop him from standing for Parliament as long as the debt is paid and he's not forced into bankruptcy. ●

'No refuge'

THE HOME OFFICE is demanding that a Ugandan woman leave the UK by next Sunday 14 July together with her seven year old son Brian although she says 'my fate in Uganda is obvious. None of my family have survived the Amin and Obote regimes — we have no relatives alive and free in Uganda.' Rose Alaso has been in the UK since 1979 and seeking refugee status since 1982. For last-ditch efforts to help her phone Leeds 492510. ●

Alliance held May lead in pre-Brecon June voting

THE LIBERAL/SDP Alliance maintained their May lead in votes cast in council by-elections throughout June and up to polling day in Brecon & Radnor.

There were 51 by-elections in this five week period and 21 seats changed hands. More than 68,000 votes were cast in 34 three-cornered contests and these divided as follows:

Liberal/SDP	24,238	35.3%
Labour	21,369	31.2%
Conservative	18,328	26.7%
Others	4,647	6.8%

The table of gains and losses shows that Labour's net position increased by one and the Alliance continued making heavy inroads into Conservative seats:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Con	21	14	4	11
Labour	16	3	4	17
Liberal	8	2	11	17
SDP	1	1	4	4
Others	5	3	—	2

There are some preliminary signs that the fierce fight between Labour and the Alliance in Brecon & Radnor was also reflected in some council by-elections. Labour won seats from the Liberals in Rochdale and East Staffordshire while the SDP won a Labour seat in Bangor and the Liberals two seats from Labour in Kirklees and Shepway.

Sheffield Labour gains

The rise in Labour's fortunes as evidenced in Brecon & Radnor was repeated to greater effect in Sheffield on the same day. Two Conservative vacancies in Broomhill Ward in that city were won by Labour — for the first time since local government re-organisation in the early '70s.

We will have to wait until the autumn to see whether there is any discernible 'post-Brecon factor' and, if so, whether Labour or the Alliance is the principal beneficiary.

David Cowling

Council scoreboard

6 June

Manchester City	Lab hold
Northumberland CC	Lab hold
Hackney LBC	Lib hold
Sefton DC	Con hold
Grampian RC	SNP hold

13 June

Reigate & Banstead DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Torbay DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Vale of White Horse DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Manchester CC	Lab hold
Motherwell DC	Lab hold
Strathclyde RC	Lab hold
Lancashire CC	Lib hold

20 June

East Staffs DC	LAB GAIN (Lib)
Rochdale DC	LAB GAIN (Lib)
Rother DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
South Staffs DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Arfon DC	SDP GAIN (Lab)
Rother DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Wimborne DC	Lib hold
Arfon DC	Lib hold
Bedfordshire CC	Con hold
Kings Lynn DC	Con hold
Aylesbury Vale DC	Con hold
North Dorset DC	Ind hold

27 June

Kirklees DC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Shepway DC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Shepway DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Shepway DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Braintree DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Chiltern DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Taunton Deane DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Kings Lynn DC	CON GAIN (SDP)
Penwith DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Perth & Kinross DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Battersea North GLC	Lab hold
Allerdale DC	Lab hold
Wandsworth LBC	Lab hold
Brent LBC	Lab hold
Teignbridge DC	Lib hold
Arun DC	Con hold
Arun DC	Con hold

4 July

Sheffield DC	2 LAB GAINS (Con)
Kingswood DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Broxbourne DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Chesterfield DC	Lab hold
Derwentside DC	Lab hold
Sheffield DC	Lab hold
Sunderland DC	Lab hold
Sandwell DC	Lib hold
Broxbourne DC	Con hold

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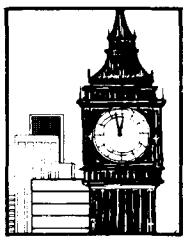

HUGH STEPHENSON

Wanted: an idea whose time has come

MR TADPOLE and Mr Taper, you will remember, had lost their seats in the House of Commons as a result of the mandatory reselection of candidates following the Great Reform Bill of 1832. But Benjamin Disraeli's pair of archetypal machine politicians had 'already commenced the combinations which on a future occasion were to bear them back to the assembly where they were so missed' by the time that readers of his best political novel *Coningsby* caught up with them.

Tadpole had in his head a definite strategy for the forthcoming election that would give the Party 'a clear working majority of twenty-two'. Taper gave it as his considered view that 'there is nothing like a good *small* majority' — an entirely sensible Chief Whip's point that Francis Pym tried to make to the Prime Minister before the last election, but which she chose not to take.

Both of Disraeli's old pros, though, were certain about one thing. You can't run an effective election campaign unless you have 'a good cry'. Taper thought that a promise to 'repeal the malt tax' would do — *Coningsby* was written and published as Robert Peel's Tory Party was pushing through the repeal of the corn laws. Tadpole was not entirely persuaded that this was an ideal suggestion, but his view was pragmatic. 'It is a good cry though, if there be no other'.

IF LABOUR has won last week's Brecon & Radnor by-election, with the Tories trailing in third place, we should all no doubt be congratulating ourselves that Labour under the leadership of Neil Kinnock was on course to win the next general election with a 'good small majority'. As it was, it is clear that there is still work to be done.

What were the pluses of Brecon? Well, first, the Tory vote obviously collapsed (from just under half the total of votes cast for the three serious candidates at the 1983 general election to just over a quarter last Thursday). Then, though many natural Tories no doubt voted Liberal to stop Labour winning, the Labour vote itself went up (absolutely, despite the lower by-election turnout; but even more clearly in relative terms — from 26 to 35 per cent of the total votes cast for the three main parties). If Labour's electoral position makes any further significant gain, there is not much capacity left for Tories to keep out Labour candidates by voting tactically in seats like Brecon.

It must also be said that the feel and organisation of the Labour by-election campaign were cheerful, confident and efficient — in marked contrast to other recent elections (by- and general) — which it would be kind to describe as shambles. The new General Secretary Larry Whitty is clearly in the process of going through the Labour Party organisation at Walworth Road like the dose of salts that his amiable and conciliatory predecessor was unable to achieve. The energetic and efficient Joyce Gould was allowed to get on and run an effective by-election operation, which she did. The Labour campaign exhibited none of the recently traditional paranoia towards the 'meeja'. In fact the representatives of the capitalist press who went to cover the events in Brecon found the revitalised Labour press and publicity operation apparently self-confident and positively helpful. Add in all — except for Dr Willey, who failed this time to achieve his personal ambition of becoming and MP — it was a much better than average all round by-election performance by Labour. A good 8 out of 10.

And yet . . . and yet. It may be churlish when Labour is at last showing signs of getting a political act together to point out that there were obvious minuses showing through the Brecon campaign. Taper and Tadpole would have put their fingers on it at once. There was no 'cry', good or bad. There just was no positive political cry at all. The resources were put into (and the satisfaction taken from) the *organisation* of the by-election. No one seemed to think that the *politics* of the by-election mattered at all.

The name of the game during the Brecon campaign seemed to be to make sure that Dr Willey said as little as possible, beyond the fact that he was firmly behind Labour Party policy. Keep politics out of politics, please.

The Benn-Scargill interventions during the by-election campaign served to underline this point. It is said, no doubt reliably, that the publicity given to Tony Benn's call for a total amnesty from Labour for all jailed miners and the coverage given to Arthur Scargill at the special NUM conference at Sheffield put last-minute stuffing into the Tory and Liberal campaigns in Brecon. The hearsay evidence to this effect from those involved in canvassing in the constituency is quite convincing, though whether it made the difference that stopped a Labour victory will never be provable.

THE FRACAS within the Labour Party over this episode, though, highlights the danger of what might be called the 'administrative' route back to power. The hard Left within the Labour Party is in complete and demoralised disarray. The issues that sent Michael Foot as leader staggering helplessly from pillar to post — Militant, reselection, fears about the political levy, left-wing control of the policy making machinery — have largely dissolved in the face of the determined programme that Kinnock set himself of getting the party machine under control as the first step to getting Labour back into government and himself into No.10. Since becoming leader, he has shown a steely seriousness of purpose about achieving these ambitions which friend and foe alike were rather slow to recognise.

But how is it then a defeated King Arthur or a powerless Tony Benn can still apparently rock the Kinnock boat? The answer must be that the revived politcal support for Labour is still fragile and negative. Voters are deserting Thatcherism because it is an evident failure and because its concentration on helping those who are best off in society has become cumulatively offensive to a gross extent. The Kinnock strategy to date seems to have been to concentrate on ensuring that nothing is said or done that might stop Thatcher losing the next election, rather that on taking a Labour initiative.

It is a strategy that might work. There have been moments when Oppositions have found themselves in government because the government blew it for themselves — Harold Wilson losing in 1970 and Harold Wilson winning in February 1974 are two cases in point (and it was never clear whether winning or losing surprised him the more).

But in general the major turning points in British politics have been when the electorate sensed that the Opposition represented a political idea whose time had come. For Labour, certainly, 1945 and 1964 were such moments. For the Tories 1950-51 was about removing state controls and Thatcher in 1979 was about 'getting the State off your back'.

There is every sense, reflected at Brecon, that the Tory Party today represents an idea whose time has gone. There is no corresponding sense that the Labour Party in general, or the Kinnock leadership in particular, has a vision of what democratic socialism in Britain in the 1990s ought to be aiming to achieve.

Disraeli was a cynic, but he won elections. Labour was pipped at the post at Brecon. Unless it takes the Tadpole-Taper advice and decides positively what it wishes to stand for, it is likely to get pipped in a more important upcoming contest — the next general election. □

Peter Kellner is away until August.

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NO BRAKE YET ON ARTHUR

Richard Open/Camera Press

MICK JOHNSON describes the tension within the NUM leadership as it works out its post-strike strategy and strives to maintain a facade of unity

IT IS AN irony of that the Communist Party of Great Britain should be a moderating force within the National Union Mineworkers. But it is a fact.

This has something to do with the split within the Party to produce a 'Eurocommunist' and a 'Stalinist' faction (both of these labels mislead as much as they describe): but it has at least as much to do with the pressures on, and views of, the leading Communists within the NUM.

Throughout the 12-month strike, there was a subterranean tension within the Left which grew more acute the more obvious it became that the strike could not be 'won'. Mr Mick McGahey, the NUM vice-president and one of the *troika* of national leaders — Arthur Scargill, Peter Heathfield and himself — exercised the most discreet of pressures on his president to broaden the campaign to gain labour movement and public support, and to refocus interest on the issues in dispute away from picket line violence.

Martin Shakeshaft

Mick McGahey (left) is trying to moderate the Scargill line, but Arthur is keeping right on

The climax of the mass picketing was at Orgreave, especially on 18 June, when pickets and police battled ferociously (and unequally) for primacy. Contingents of South Wales and Scots miners who had been bussed down to the scene were bussed back without joining the battle, their leaders horrified. In both of these areas where CP influence still counted for something (though membership was, as everywhere else, down to very low levels), the leaderships began to grumble almost audibly about the tactics of the Sheffield-born national leadership.

McGahey's pressure had some success. He remained the crucial link between the TUC and the NUM, the only one of the *troika* whom most General Council members knew and felt comfortable with. He was instrumental in cementing the deal which brought the NUM to the TUC at its September Congress, and which produced the resolution of 'total support' with the dissenting voices — in the conference hall at least — marginalised.

His instincts were probably for a deal when the offers looked tempting in summer — but if he pressed for acceptance he was overriden by a president whose grasp of his executive and whose status of 'first amongst equals' in the *troika* was never seriously at risk until the end. Yet it was at the end, when South Wales, in almost open revolt, developed and spread the policy of ending the strike without an agreement, that the 'alternative Left' first publicly played a winning hand.

Since then, the need to keep the ranks closed against the twin pressures of NCB cuts and splits from within has preserved a veneer of unity in the leadership — but the reality is that there is considerable strain in keeping that show on the road.

In Scotland, the campaign to win re-instatement for the sacked miners has drawn on the widest spread of support, political and non-political — the churches, even the Conservative Party (at local levels) have been drawn in. In Wales, the Coalfields Community Campaign performs the same role, with the object of mobilising public pressure against pit closures. Both of these approaches are increasingly and explicitly posed as alternatives to Scargill's continuing calls for strike action by South Wales and Scots leaders. Communist influence in these areas is strong — as it is in Kent, though there it is of the hard-line wing which supports Scargill's 'class war' policy.

THE NUM Conference in Sheffield last week could have shown these paths diverge publicly; but once again, the need for unity in the face of the Nottinghamshire split, the right-wing's wholesale challenge to the rules and the presence in large numbers of media reporters ruled out any public display of disagreement within the Left. The runes could be read, though.

A week before the conference, the CP's

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miners' advisory committee agreed that the new rules, which the executive would present to the conference and which centralised power in Sheffield, were divisive. In a mix of tactics and policy, the committee wanted the proposed new rules put on the back burner. They could not oppose them openly since their defeat would be advertised as a defeat for the Left.

In another sign of disagreement, the last NUM national executive before the conference saw Left leaders like Emlyn Williams, the South Wales President, remind Scargill that he was the executive's servant, not its master. Increasingly Scargill had come under pressure from his Left colleagues to take a lower profile. In particularly they wanted him to drop the constant references to further action. They had little observable effect on his public performance.

At the conference itself, much of the argument was around the rule change which underpins Scargill's security of tenure as president: the removal of his right to vote in the union. If he has a vote — and it *was* unclear in the old rule book — he must stand for re-election under the 1984 Trade Union Act. South Wales, one centre of the Left alternative, did join the right-wing areas in voting against the rule change. Scotland, another 'alternative' centre, did not mandate its delegation, on the understanding that they were free to vote for a reference back of the new rules to the executive to await a less divisive time. This move never materialised, and Scotland backed most of the rule changes — with some apprehension.

In fact, as was often the case during the strike, it was the formerly Right-led areas — and former right-wing officials — who were most supportive. Sid Vincent of Lancashire, Tommy Callan of Durham, Denis Murphy of Northumberland and the Midlands, Power Group 1 and Durham Mechanics, all under new Left leadership, came in solidly behind, padding out the thick base of support from Yorkshire to give almost all the new rules their required majorities.

LEFT-WING dissidence needed a platform outside the conference to dare to speak its name. Last Wednesday, Arfon Evans, the President of Maerdy ('Little Moscow') and George Bolton, Vice-President of Scotland, both CP national executive members, took a CP meeting on the conference's 'fringe'. They argued the line of 'new Left realism': that defeat should be seen for what it was, that alliances were required to complement an industrial strength no longer invincible before a determned government, that — in Bolton's words — 'militancy is not enough'.

McGahey sat at the back of the hall, saying nothing, but nodding and harrumphing agreement at intervals. They got a strong argument from a number of delegates in the audience, who combined with members of far Left groups to brand the new line as near to a betrayal of the new flame of militancy.

But Scargill had already set down the position: in his lengthy and typically uncompromising presidential address, he set his face explicitly against the emerging new line. It was not, he said, 'the failure *to* mass picket, but the failure *of* mass picketings' which was to blame; the tactic of ending the dispute without an agreement had been, he claimed — without amplification — shown to be wrong.

In sum:

> We are involved in a class war and any attempt to deny that flies in the face of reality. Confronted by our enemies, mobilisation, we are entitled, indeed obliged, to call upon our class for massive support. In any future industrial action by any union, including ours, this must be done.

The 'new Left realists' are embarked on an ambitious project. Faced with a NCB which sees its only course as one of rapid retrenchment, they are attempting to construct — somewhat after the model of the British Road to Socialism, the CP's programme — 'broad democratic alliances' which will deflect the blows even while the President continues to push publicly for a quite different approach. They are trying to cajole into the NUM camp elements in society — other political parties, community groups, even the police — which Scargill continues to scorn or abhor. And all the while without moving their lips: it is a difficult trick.

It is made more so by the more public divide in the union, which has split Notts and other 'working miner' groups from the NUM proper. The new Left realists think that the split could have been avoided by more cheerful handling: but they have no sympathy for the splitters and must, again — wearily — rally round the Sheffield flag.

In the longer term, the logic of their position would demand that they replace their President. But they have no one of his talent or stature, and could destroy the Left if they moved against Scargill. They are likely to be forced into the hard slog of rubbing away at his flint-like nature, trying to shape it to suit the new line. □

LONDON'S NEW TRANSPORT PLAN IS READY

Last year the GLC sent to the Environment Secretary proposals for altering most parts of the Greater London Development Plan. Many thousands of Londoners helped in producing the Plan for London's Future, for example, many women completed a questionnaire on their needs. Whatever happens to the GLC London will still need an up-to-date Plan to guide decisions.

GLC
Working for London

Now the Plan has been completed with the addition of road and transport proposals:

* **Priority for public transport – safety for transport users**
* **More room and more facilities for pedestrians and cyclists**
* **Lower fares to make all transport quicker and safer**
* **Keep juggernauts in their place**
* **Road building only where needed to protect jobs and the environment**

As required by law the new Plan has been sent to the Environment Secretary for him to consider. **You have the right to give him your views until August 23.** Copies of the Plan are at borough offices and at County Hall. A leaflet is available in English and nine other languages. For more information or your own copy of the Plan ring County Hall on 633-4400.

YOUR VIEWS WILL HELP DECIDE WHAT HAPPENS TO TRANSPORT IN LONDON

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LIBERALS SUFFOCATE IN OWEN'S EMBRACE

Victory at Brecon cannot be translated into national victory while the Alliance is paralysed by caution and centralisation argues BERNARD GREAVES, passionate Liberal

City Syndication

Did somebody say something (yawn) about a ferment of new and radical ideas?

DESPONDENCY AND FRUSTRATION about their party's chances evaporated among many Liberals after last week's success at Brecon & Radnor. The euphoria was misplaced because however impressive the victory it does little to alter the long-term prospects of the Alliance gaining power. Outstanding by-election results in the past have made comparatively little difference in the general election that followed.

The Liberal Party went to the country in 1979, its last pre-Alliance general election, with the most radical manifesto it had produced since the Second World War. Its central theme was that Britain's repeated failures in public policy since the war, especially its chronic economic failure, were the inevitable results of the inadequacy of the very structure of government. Not until power was decentralised to elected Regional Assemblies, not until secrecy was replaced by open government, not until Parliament was reformed so that it could control both the Civil Service and the Executive, could Britain be governed effectively and repeated mistakes in every other field be avoided.

In the 18 months that followed, the Liberal Party was in a ferment of new and radical ideas. It rejected nuclear power, both civil and military. It embarked on a fundamental commitment to an ecological perspective. It questioned the need for economic growth and began exploring policies for increasing wealth without depleting non-renewable resources. It began to move seriously into the area of sexual politics, re-examining its commitments to both women's rights and gay rights.

In essence the Liberal Party was espousing a comprehensive and thorough-going radicalism that was both non-socialist and distinctively Liberal. But these ideas were never fully worked out. The advent of the Alliance brought them to a halt.

By contrast, SDP policy is cautious, right of centre and essentially conservative. Rather than challenging the structure of the government, they aim to defend, improve and use it with increased efficiency. They stand proudly within the consensus of British politics. Their twin central beliefs are that social progress can be paid for only out of economic growth and that to question the need for nuclear defence within the Atlantic Alliance is close to treason: very much the conventional assumptions of the 1960s. David Owen, in particular, is fanatically hostile to any criticism of nuclear weapons.

For the leaders of the SDP, who were preparing to be the next generation of government, the 1960s have come to seem a golden age, whose equilibrium was disturbed by the extreme Left in the Labour Party. So they quit and set up their own party. Indeed so traumatic was the experience that they reject out of hand any policy acceptable to the extreme Left, no matter who else shares it and how rational it may be. Their rejection is automatic and total. Thus they reject much contemporary Liberalism.

As a result, the policy of the Alliance has consisted of a succession of Liberal retreats to satisfy the Social Democrats. Creative policy thinking in the Liberal Party has ceased and the SDP has conspicuously failed to inject ideas of its own. Alliance policy is a tense compromise between irreconcilable points of view, always threatening to break out into open conflict. That state of affairs deprives the Alliance of any significant impact on political debate.

THE REBIRTH of the Liberals as the party of radical non-conformism began in the 1970s. The generation of radicals brought into the party by Jo Grimond created an activist, campaigning, open, participatory and highly committed party, which concentrated resources with considerable success on penetrating local government. It was inspired by the ideology of community politics put forward by Michael Meadowcroft, Gordon Lishman and others.

The Parliamentary leadership neither welcomed nor understood what was going on. It happened in spite of them. And it introduced a vigorous new radical style, wholly at odds with the traditional moderate image cultivated at national level. The radicalism paid off: in 1979, Liberals polled better in the local than in the Parliamentary elections.

It was the traditionalist moderate leadership of the Liberal Party who formed the Alliance with the SDP. It reflected their values and their approach; it was never in tune with the radical activists who by then firmly controlled all the democratic institutions of the party including the national Party Council. But the Alliance was seductive and the activists accepted it because it offered the prospect of a short cut to power. That short cut has not materialised, and restiveness within the Liberal Party is again increasing.

Up and down the country, the Alliance is working well in a few places — Cambridge, for instance — and in others it is acceptable. But in most places Liberal activists are getting fed up with having their energies diverted from campaigning activity by endless wrangles with the SDP over the selection of candidates and local government policy. There are few SDP equivalents to the radical activists of the Liberal Pary. They are constrained by the centralised structure of their party and the failure of their own leadership to recognise the vital nature of their contribution. Most SDP members are, at best, inexperienced in the hard graft and discipline required to fight one's way from political irrelevance to a significant presence in the council chambers of Britain.

Universally, Liberal activists refer to the SDP as 'the soggies'.

IN ORGANISATIONAL terms the Alliance was a gross mismatch from the start. The county council election results demonstrate that it still is. It was an alliance between the Liberal Party's political organisation, extended and consolidated into nearly every part of the country over 20 years, and a national list of SDP members. That list is now appreciably smaller than it was in 1981 at the end of the SDP's inaugural year and in most parts of the country no nearer to being an effectively organised political force on the ground. In many of the constituencies allocated to it, the SDP leans heavily on the local Liberals for support and expertise.

This imbalance has led to reasonable fears in the SDP, particularly at national level, of their being overwhelmed by the greater local strength of the Liberals; and to a desire by many in the Liberal Party to absorb the SDP under the guise of merger. The SDP response has

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been to impose a strong central control to prevent their local members being outmanoeuvred in agreements reached locally.

Nowhere has this tension been more evident than in candidate selection. The very survival of the SDP depends on a roughly equal share-out of seats, and of potentially winnable seats at that, a share that their organisational strength does not justify. Liberals, accustomed to local autonomy and early candidate selection, are eager to get on with the job. Their experience is that achieving results which significantly improve on the national trend depends on good candidates campaigning in the field over several years rather than appearing merely for the election campaign itself.

The SDP, to counteract local Liberal strength, has been forced to insist on the painstakingly slow and tedious procedures of agreeing area allocations of seats in line with national guidelines.

As a result, hundreds of ill-prepared Alliance candidates will be selected at the last minute and local strength dissipated.

MONEY IS another problem and source of strain. Both Alliance parties depend on raising contributions from their supporters.

The Liberal Party has learned how to survive using voluntary rather than professional help and local self-reliance rather than headquarters servicing. The backbone of its income has been affiliation fees from constituency associations.

Now after 20 years of increasing constituency affiliation, the trend has reversed; constituencies to be fought by the SDP are failing to affiliate. The Liberal Party is left trying to fund a national party from a base that is shrinking towards only half the country.

The SDP, which fund-raises nationally, also has a declining financial base as its membership shrinks. Neither partner can at present find the resources for the aggressive campaigning at national level, or to fund the infrastructure both need.

If, notwithstanding these intrinsic weaknesses, the Alliance were to achieve power, there must be a serious question as to whether any resulting government, merely to contain such divergent forces and contradictory basic tenets, would be gripped by paralysis: a government of inaction, vacillation, compromise, broken promises and dashed hopes.

If that is the best future the Alliance can offer, it would be better to end it now. □

Bernard Greaves is a former Director of Policy Promotion for the Liberal Party and co-author of The Theory and Practice of Community Politics.

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□Border and his jubilant team-mates duly chanted their victory anthem: 'Under the Southern Cross I stand, a sprig of wattle in my hand. A native of my native land, Australia. . .you effing beauty!' It was the 'effing' bit roaring across the hallowed turf of the home of cricket that startled (and probably disgusted) some MCC members. — *Daily Telegraph* (Robert Jeffcoate)

BRECON & RADNOR

NOT IN — BUT UP AND RUNNING AT LONG, LONG LAST

TONY HEATH exults in how Labour waged the battle

THE COMPUTER graphics which peppered Friday's BBC Newsnight dissection of the Brecon & Radnor by-election were stunning. Bar charts expanded and contracted like John McEnroe's ego, graphs snaked convincingly across the screen and blobs of red and blue appeared fleetingly on a map of Britain. And, of course, there was Peter Snow translating swings and sways into the composition of the next House of Commons — all courtesy of the 38,412 electors who turned out in the vast mid-Wales constituency on 4 July.

It was impressive television, a fitting climax to a day when the electronic media, with the print journalists relegated to a supporting role, took over Brecon and crowds waiting for the result outside the Guildhall played 'spot the TV personality'.

What the combined efforts of technology, the BBC exit poll and instant punditry could not assess was the marked upsurge in Labour's new found confidence. It was Labour's best by-election in terms of swing for decades. Failure to capture the seat was just about the only blot on a landscape of hugely promising aspect. Of course, to win is the name of the game. But in terms of enthusiasm even after the declaration, morale and commitment Labour's campaign was a remarkable triumph.

In a small terraced house in Rhayader, Joan Annetts, a local ward secretary, marshalled her helpers with the same efficiency which characterised what will be seen as one of Labour's smoothest electoral operations.

The Labour promises among the 2,623 Rhayader electors came out solidly — a supporter from Hendon 200 miles away attending the isolated St Harmon district polling station while others from North Wales perspiringly called once, twice even three times on electors expressing support for Labour's candidate.

Had it not been for the total collapse of the Conservative vote — down from 18,255 in 1983 to 10,631 last week — which drove waverers into the Liberal camp, Richard Willey would today be the Member for Brecon & Radnor. The 559 Liberal majority came gift-wrapped in blue. Allan Rogers, the Rhonda's ebullient Labour MP, commented: 'If the Tories had put some poles up their candidate's legs to stiffen him we would have won'.

Labour's by-election campaign team — drawn from Walworth Road and the Cardiff regional office where Anita Gale has just completed a successful first year as Welsh organiser — functioned smoothly. It had to, if only to cope with the flood of volunteers which converged on Brecon — 1,000 the weekend before polling day. Every member of the shadow cabinet (except Gwyneth Dunwoody who was ill) joined the fight and about 150 members of the PLP were out on the knocker. Unity was stronger than for years past and the turnout in strongholds like the old mining town of Ystradgynlais was phenomenal.

John Harris/IFL

A couple of poles up the Tory candidate's legs, and Richard Willey would have been striding into the Chamber

Brecon & Radnor is not even on the list of 121 seats Labour must win in order to form the next government. It is somewhere around the 170th in the table of possibles. Yet it came within a whisker of falling. The happiness factor remains crucial. Labour held its post-declaration party at a Brecon pub curiously named The Gremlin. It's just across the road from Brecon Barracks — and a Parachute Regiment officer drinking in the saloon bar wondered who had won. It was that sort of party — the disappointment at failing so narrowly beng surmounted by the knowledge that, given good sense and a firm hold on principle, the party is on course to send Neil Kinnock to No. 10 whenever Margaret Thatcher decides to call it a day. □

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TORIES AIM TO MAKE IT ROUGHER

> The spike consisted simply of a bathroom and lavatory, and...long double rows of stone cells... with a smell which somehow, I had foreseen from its appearance; a smell of soft soap, Jeyes' fluid and latrines — cold, discouraging, prisonish smell.
>
> The porter herded us all into the passage, and then told us to come into the bathroom six at a time, to be searched before bathing.
>
> George Orwell: *Down And Out In Paris And London*

THE 'SPIKES' of Orwell's day are the DHSS-administered Resettlement Units of the present. The 23 hostels offer shelter to single people — mostly men — who are homeless and destitute. Each Unit, which could be a Nissen hut or new purpose built accommodation, is also a Supplementary Benefit Office serving only the residents.

In September, the Unit at Camberwell in South London will close its doors when the lease expires. This former workhouse had, said Howard Fuller, a member of the civil service union, CPSA, traditionally acted as a 'dumping ground' for a 'hardcore of old men... with unfortunate social habits'. Some of them have lived there for 20 years.

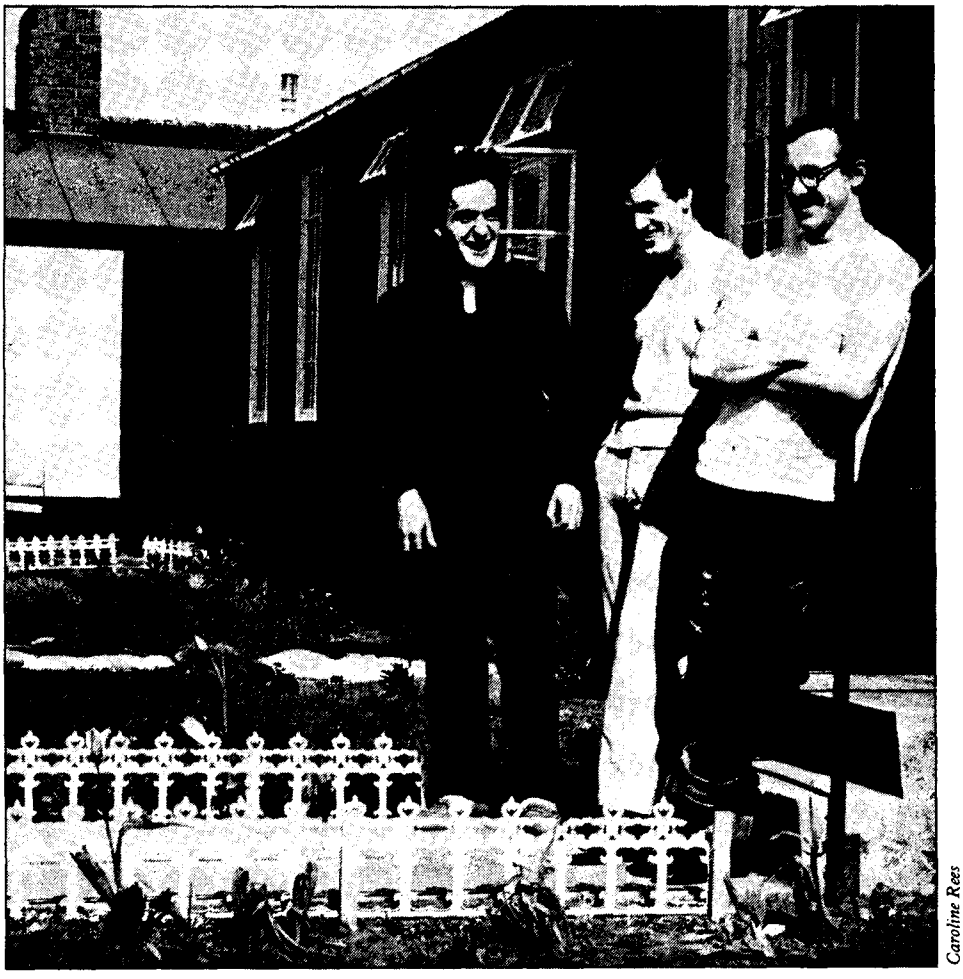
DHSS policy is the 'gradual closure' of the Units, Social Security Minister Tony Newton announced in February. The eight 'most dilapidated' have got three years. The life of the remaining provincial Units will depend on local discussions about what will take their place. The seven Units left in London will be reviewed once the results of the Camberwell Replacement Scheme have been assessed.

Voluntary organisations have been earmarked to take over. Yet, by common consent, it is they who are least able to replace the Units' most important quality — they take in absolutely anyone straight off the street. The success of the vountary sector has been with 'second-stage' accommodation, for people *selected* as comparatively easy to house.

The Simon Community's response is typical: 'Most hostels don't work with rough sleepers who the Resettlement Units take,' said Philip Whiteley. 'The government are expecting us to pick up the tab, and we've got to say No.' In South Wales, where the Unit at Stormy Down caters for a large number of alcoholics, psychiatric patients and ex-prisoners, voluntary organisations have pledged not to 'break ranks' but to 'stand firm' against the temptation of government funding.

CHAR, the Campaign for Single Homeless People, recently held a one-day conference on the future of Resettlement Units. Welcoming closure, they firmly believe that direct-access beds are primarily the role of the *statutory* sector, and favour a transfer of responsibility to local authority housing departments as part of a comprehensive range of services for homeless people.

Local authorities would also be better situated to provide for ethnic minorities and women, most of whom are effectively excluded. There are only 70 beds in the country for



Caroline Rees

Closure of the hostels that cater for those who have fallen completely through the welfare system is now government policy. CAROLINE REES and VALERIE HARLAND report on the campaign to get that policy changed and describe what it would mean to those looked after in units like Fazakerley (above)

Fazakerley Resettlement Unit Liverpool

Paul, *22, hails from Dublin. He has been at Fazakerley before, and was found a Council flat. 'It didn't work out'. 'You're not here just for the hell of it, just for fun. You're here to sort youself out. It's like Butlins compared to the ones in London.'*

Bruce, *26, was manager of a guest-house in Southampton. 'There were discrepancies between the girl I was going out with and myself. It built to a head. And in the end, it's either me turning round and belting her latest boyfriend, or walking out. And I'd been in the nick before...so I walked out.' He found the poeple he knew in Liverpool had moved away. His name is down for a flat in Liverpool or Widnes. 'If it's so bad, how come there's people staying here? 'Cause they've got a better chance here of making something of themselves... It may take a bit of time to get a flat... but while they're here, they've got a better chance to recuperate, to make friends, find out what they're entitled to...'*

Sean, *21, had a full-time job on a farm in Wales. 'I made the biggest mistake of all. I got married... I was brought up in the country, come up here. Can't get used to town life so been out, been back. I found that this is the best place that anyone could be...I had my 21st birthday...the best birthday I've ever had. It was that good, Paul and Peter had to carry me home. Seriously. One of the lads had had a few in the morning and he comes in the dining-room...apparently he jumped the queue or something...that was it...tea-urn was all over the floor...it was like an art-gallery — full of butties!'*

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women — all in London with one women-only Unit at Camden. 'Ludicrous', says worker Carmel Foster. The tendency for women to 'go under the cloak of a man' — to live with a man to avoid being homeless — distorts the true homelessness figures.

Some members of civil service unions, like Howard Fuller, doubt whether local ratepayers would be keen to support itinerants from outside their area. The unions aim to dissuade voluntary agencies from accepting government money which, in any case, is not sufficient to run a 'high-care' service. Nor is it guaranteed over the long term. This withdrawal of state responsibility for the single homeless is 'firmly wthin the Tories' self-help philosophy' according to SCPS official Mark Panto. It is, in the view of Howard Fuller, 'privatisation.'

Labour's Michael Meacher called the decision 'barbarism of the worst kind...They know that without this limited facility many will die sleeping rough.' This conviction is echoed at the Fazakerley Unit in Liverpool. Closure 'in such difficult economic times is an act of sheer vandalism.' Merseyside MPs have apparently been 'impressed' by reforms made under manager Alan Burnham — gardens, aviary, fishpond and a liberal managerial style. 'The Wets, and even the Damps, are having second thoughts,' claimed one CSU representative. With their comparatively high resettlement rate, the Unit boasts a star-studded array of supporters — MPs, both Bishops, the Probation Service, the Drugs Council.

HARD DRUG ABUSE is an increasing problem for the Fazakerley staff who have an average of four heroin addicts a day in the Unit. There is anyway an influx of young people. Voluntary organisations rely on the Unit to assess and refer people in need, said the CSU's branch secretary John Lewis.

Newbury is on the 'circuit', housing a high number of itinerants and men out of the forces, most of them self-referrals. Newbury Council has none of Liverpool's commitment towards single homeless people. The Unit even has to send residents to bed and breakfast hotels in Bournemouth. It is bleaker than Fazakerley. No TV before teatime and no admission if you are not sober. Manager 'Joe' Joseph: 'We can't have a bloke pissed to the eyebrows upsetting people who are here to go off it'. Hairy grey blankets are issued from the Kit Store.

SCPS official Mark Panto, speaking for the unions (who face a loss of 600 jobs), wants to see an injection of resources, improved staff training (for those who currently pick it up ad hoc), modernised buildings, and an increase in smaller Units with single bedrooms.

There are justified criticisms of the Units which the government has been quick to pick up. They say that investment required for the upkeep of some of the older premises is prohibitive, that the institutions are too large, have a low success rate and are not geared to varying local circumstances. Those who work in the field are unconvinced. One CHAR worker thinks simply that Tories (Right and Left) are happy to accept the closures because money will be saved, and/or they herald a further withdrawal from State welfare provision.

'When there's no one turning up at the gates, *then* it's OK to close', said a spokesperson for the management at Fazakerley. The unions know Resettlement Units are far from perfect but until local authorities provide adequate alternatives, as Howard Fuller says, 'they're all we've got'. If co-operation is refused, the government will have to back down as they are obliged by law to provide emergency shelter.

The homelessness total is rising rapidly. Municipal house-building is down 50 per cent. Mental hospital closures are 'turfing' patients out when they have nowhere suitable to go and no one to care for them. Voluntary organisations are overburdened and engaged in competition. Local authority grants are being slashed. Yet the Tory tanks rumble onwards. 'The public debate on homelessness is the most positive thing to come out of the announcement', says Mark Panto. For the unions, he believes, it is a winnable campaign. □

Camden Resettlement Unit

Bridget *is 42 and has been at Camden for three months. An alcoholic, she feels secure enough to choose now whether she drinks or not. 'If I'd gone to a bed and breakfast, I probably would have taken an overdose or drunk myself silly.' When she was in an alcoholic unit, her common-law husband forced her to sign over her share of their house. She is now taking the case to court.*

Diane, *who is 26, used to live with her parents in Birmingham. She's been coming to the Unit off and on. 'It was difficult with my dad. He's a bit of a rogue at times.' She would like her own Council flat. 'It's about time I settled down.' At weekends, she goes out with her boyfriend. In the week, she occupies herself at handicraft sessions.*

Sharon, *18, was brought up in care, then lived with her mother for a short time until she disappeared again. Previously in a bug-ridden bed and breakfast hotel, she prefers the Unit. 'When you're squatting, you don't get a place...it's OK, but it's not for the future. But in a place like this...you can work out what you're going to do with your life.'*

Newbury Resettlement Unit

John, *who is 73, has been at Newbury 'too long to remember'. Records show this to be ten years. He got 'fed up' with mining in Sunderland, and left. He spends his time walking round the town, and his money on tobacco, and says: 'I'll be stopping here now till it's finished.'*

At 62, **Robert***'s 20 years 'on the road' 'working with farmers' are behind him. Limerick-born, he returned to Newbury after an eight-month stint in board and lodgings in Ilfracombe. 'They wanted me to change to another room. Well, you don't like change, do you?' He spent eight years at Camberwell, but moved out when things began to 'deteriorate'. If Newbury closes, 'I'd buy a little tent...'*

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THIN BLUE LINE GETS IN KNOTS

There's a great gap between what people want of the police and what the police can provide. RICHARD KINSEY has just surveyed the Merseyside police to find out what they do, and here reports on his findings

Liverpool — a little street-cred from the cops

Derek Massey

FEAR OF CRIME pervades the lives of many people living in British cities. The call for more effective policing is consistently one of the half dozen most strongly expressed political demands. Chief constables have responded to this demand with a concerted plea for more resources and more officers.

Yet surveys of public demand about policing show that it is not necessarily about more police officers, but perhaps just a different organisation of police work. The Merseyside Crime Survey, published last December, showed that public priorities for the police were: the provision of an emergency response, the investigation of crime, and the maintenance of a deterrent presence on the streets.

Merseyside is a perfect testing ground for such demands as, at 3.10 officrs per 1000 members of the population, it has the highest ratio of police to public outside London. At £71.58 a year for every man woman and child in the county, it is also the most expensive force outside London.

Thre are some 4,600 officers in Merseyside, of whom around 1900 officers are formally allocated to patrol work. However, at any one time there will be on average only 185 divisional patrol officers on patrol duty. Some of these will be attending court, answering calls, interviewing suspects and so forth. On average then, there will be about 126 officers (2.7 per cent of the force) actually on the street and available to respond to calls. This includes the Traffic and Operational Support Divisions as well as the patrol officers.

One reason regularly put forward for the need to increase staff levels is the large number of emergency calls which must be met — 'the thin blue line is being stretched to breaking point'. However, in Merseyside only 3 per cent of all police time is actually spent in attending such calls. On average, foot and mobile patrols will spend about 30 minutes of an 8 hour shift dealing with 999 calls, though these minutes are scattered through the shift. Even the specialised 'Incident Response Vehicles' spend less than an hour per shift actually attending such calls. In fact, most of a patrol officer's time outside the station is spent on 'uncommitted patrol', that is driving or walking round the beat 'ready to respond' if and when called.

THERE IS then a sharp contrast between the public's highest policing priorities for emergency response and crime investigation and the small proportion of police time actually spent answering emergency calls (3 per cent) and interviewing witnesses, suspects and informants (6 per cent).

One complaint is that officers who speed to the scene of a crime do not then stay to investigate while evidence and memory are freshest. In fact, 41 per cent of police constables were critical of the level of co-operation between uniform branch and CID. This split is built into the present system in Merseyside — common elsewhere in England — which gives sole responsibility for crime investigation to the CID.

It was not, therefore, surprising that the Crime Survey identified a very high public demand for more patrol officers on the street. This is backed by 74 per cent of all police officers — including 92 per cent of senior officers — who believed that there were too few foot patrol officers. However, the police survey also revealed that at present the youngest and least experienced officers are deployed to this work. Half of all foot patrol officers are under 25.

Furthermore, foot patrolling is not a popular job. A successful career leads an officer away from the beat to the more specialised, high status work of, for example, CID. Clearly, a policy geared to increasing the number of general patrol officers must also look carefully at the career structure and the rewards — material and otherwise — for the officers concerned.

The career structure for women is very different from that of their male colleagues — 84 per cent of women have less than ten years service in comparison with 45 per cent of men. Inevitably this means that proportionately fewer women are promoted. However, it is also clear that younger women are more likely to be on administrative and 'non-operational' duties than men of the same age.

Women account for only 10 per cent of the force but in general women are no less likely to be victims of crime than men. Were force strength to be increased, therefore, it would seem preferable to recruit women. In any case, those women presently in the force would undoubtedly be better employed in roles which brought them more directly into contact with female victims of crime.

All told, some 56 per cent of police time is spent inside police premises. Fully a quarter is spent on administration and paperwork. Most worrying, 71 per cent of divisional CID time is spent inside the police station so that on average, a divisional CID officer can spend little more than an hour actually interviewing members of the public about any reported offence — generally regarded as the most effective form of crime investigation.

FROM BOTH surveys, considerable distance between the police and the communities in which they work is apparent. Thus 81 per cent of officers live outside their division; 57 per cent reported that they have neither relatives nor close friends in the division; 47 per cent said they spent none of their leisure time there. In the inner city and outer council estates — where crime is highest — some three quarters of the people interviewed said they did not know any officers well enough to talk to by name, in comparison with less than half in the affluent areas.

Do the police really need more officers? Surely, the real problem is how to get officers out on the streets. There is some scope for replacing police officers with civilian clerical workers. According to an Audit Inspectorate Report in 1983*, 'the substitution of a civilian for a police officer would result in cost savings of some £6,000 per job at 1981 prices'. This is because civilian clerical workers are paid much less than police officers.

But the real inroads must be made into the extent of unnecessary specialisation and the paperwork that entails. For example, there is no reason why officers on street patrol duty in cars should not also deal with traffic offences, or why a significant proportion of crime investigation should not be devolved to uniform beat officers. This would avoid duplication of effort by CID officers, make the work of the patrol officer more rewarding and (can it be said?) improve clear up rates.

One thing is surely clear, unless and until we have a radical restructuring of the police, only Parkinson's law will be enforced. □

**Police Service: Civilianisation and Related Matters*, HMSO, 1983.

The Survey was commissioned by Merseyside Council. It took a sample of 1 in 3 officers, of whom 73 per cent completed the questionnaire. Copies of the Survey of Merseyside Police Officers and the Merseyside Crime Survey are available, free of charge, from the Police Committee Support Section, Merseyside Metropolitan County Council, Old Hall Street, Liverpool L69 3EL.

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REPORTS REVEAL ENQUIRY WASN'T NECESSARY

New area health authority documents indicate that the enquiry into suspended consultant Wendy Savage — who championed natural births — may have been totally unnecessary. JANE LEIGHTON reports

AFTER RECEIVING four independent reports of the case of suspended consultant obstetrician Wendy Savage, Tower Hamlets Health Authority appear to have conceded that her summary suspension by Chairman Francis Cumberledge and the launch of a formal enquiry was not a proper way of assessing her competence.

Documents received by the *New Statesman* reveal the extent to which district health authority officials and consultants at the London Hospital by-passed the routine procedure for case discussions and failed to inform Savage of the investigation which now seems likley to ruin her career. They also show how, after she was suspended from her NHS consultant post, action was taken without consultation at the London Hospital Medical College to suspend her from her teaching post.

Savage was not informed that action was taken to invoke the most serious disciplinary procedure, nor did Cumberledge discuss the case with her in advance or put it before the health authority. The investigation is into her management of five cases, selected by her Head of Department, Professor Grudsinskas. They centre on the use of caesarean sections.

The health authority are now prepared to offer Savage reinstatement after a 'cooling off' period, but with a reduced case load, in a 'slot' in community obstetrics. Notes of a meeting between Michael Scott, legal adviser to the health authority and Brian Raymond, Savage's solicitor, record that 'several of her colleagues feel unhappy at the prospect of having to work with her again'.

By going straight for a formal enquiry, her Head of Department, Professor Grudzinskas, and her colleagues, chose the most drastic procedure available. If, as a result, Savage is ousted, it will resolve the deep and bitter divisions within the obstetrics division at the London hospital. Savage is known to be an opponent of the hi-tech births favoured by her colleagues. She also vigorously questioned the case for amalgamation of the obstetrics department on one site in Whitechapel and was not sympathetic to the extensive private practice of some of her colleagues.

The investigation into Savage formally began in May 1984 after the death of a nine-day-old baby, Mohammed Jeehad Uddin. He had been born by caesarian section after his mother, who had already had one caesarian, was allowed 'a trial of labour'. A brain haemorrhage was suspected but no post mortem to give a definite cause of death was performed.

Savage told the parents that the case would be discussed at the next perinatal mortality meeting of the division of obstetrics. This is usual. But Trevor Beedham, Chairman of the Division, and Grudzinskas, postponed the case discussion four times between May and August. Instead, after requesting and receiving a report from Savage, Professor Grudzinskas, Savage's Head of Department, took the case to the district management team.

As a consequence, in August last year the district medical officer formally asked Beedham and Grudzinskas for a report on Savage's competence to carry out her duties. Both men replied that they were unable to assure the Authority that Savage was safe to continue to practise obstetrics. Grudzinskas added: 'I am enquiring into at least three additional obstetric and gynaecological incidents involving this consultant'. Six weeks later, in October, Grudzinskas wrote to Richards 'Regretfully I am currently conducting an investigation into another case'. The details of the other cases were sent to the regional assessor, Gordon Bourne.

Bourne, a distinguished consultant, had voted against Savage's appointment in 1977, and supported Grudzinskas as professor in

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1982. He was known to disagree with Savage's practice of allowing, when possible, a normal delivery for breech births. Three of the five cases involve breech births. He wrote a critical report on which Savage's suspension was based. No one informed Savage of the action taken.

IN COMPLETE contrast to the assiduous and speedy investigation into Savage, the administration dealt with the distress of the Uddin family in a lax and insensitive manner. Last August, Mr and Mrs Uddin, desperate for answers to the death of their baby, lodged a complaint with the Community Health Council. Mr Uddin was not satisfied with Savage's personal explanation or that of the paediatrician who looked after the baby when it became ill 48 hours after its birth.

Four months later, the district's Complaints Panel apologised to the Uddins for the administration's 'poor performance' in failing to deal with the complaint. Proceedings were to be 'tightened up'. Some 14 months after the death of their baby the Uddins are still waiting for the Regional Health Authority report on their case. Savage was not informed that the complaints panel and the Regional Medical Officer were investigating the case.

Some months before the Uddin baby died, there was evidence that Grudzinskas was prepared to act against Savage. From February 1984 in a series of acrimonious letters, he warned Savage that her employment could be terminated 'if you fail to comply with my directions'. Throughout 1984 Savage wrote asking what his criticisms were. She protested at having to spend so much time preparing case reports for Grudzinskas when she had no idea of their purpose. (They were part of the investigation into her practice.) Finally she requested a meeting with the Dean of the London Hospital Medical College and Grudzinskas, writing 'so that you can tell me in what way you consider me to be at fault'. Grudzinskas refused to attend the three-way meeting.

After Savage was suspended from her NHS post, Professor John Blandy, Chairman of the Academic Division of Surgery at the London Medical Hospital where Savage is a senior lecturer, reported Savage's NHS suspension to the Academic Board. As a result, Savage was suspended from her teaching post. (Like Gordon Bourne, Blandy is a freemason. He is a past Master of the London Hospital Lodge and involved in higher masonic circles.)

Blandy announced this to a meeting of the Academic Division of Surgery one week after Savage's NHS suspension. There were protests at the meeting that Blandy had taken action without first warning Savage or consultation with other members of the division.

The ugly rift within the London Hospital now involves a much wider community. The community health council is demanding an enquiry the whole of the obstetric department at the London Hospital and local doctors are considering preparing cases allegedly mishandled by Savage's colleagues.

Damage to the district's maternity service is certain — and unless there is a speedy resolution to Savage's personal position, the health authority could be spending £100,000 on an enquiry which almost nobody thinks is necessary. □

Love games on centre court

Mandy Merck

FOR SOME years, British tennis reporting had a dully predictable air, confining itself to the personal lives of the stars and occasional remarks on the play. But 1984's Wimbledon saw a number of sharply worded protests on the former point, notably from John McEnroe (linked with someone he hardly knew), Martina Navratilova (linked with someone whose husband knew and had just filed for divorce) and Chris Lloyd (linked with her own husband). When all three denounced press invasions of their privacy in the underground interview room at the All England Club, the press were handed a brand new story, and one remarkably easy to research: themselves.

For the tabloid boys especially, this was a real gift, since their aversion to the actual game is legendary. (I do remember one making a particular effort to rise from the couch at the press room in Eastbourne once, in order to question me languidly about Navratilova's intentions towards Rita Mae Brown.) In those days it was still necessary to climb into the press box occasionally to get one of the most popular stories of all: the on-court outburst. Since the psychic mechanisms of even the most volatile players are not precisely like hand grenades, waiting for the outburst could require hours of gruelling attention to the competition, with nary an audible obscenity to report at day's end. But once the players had tabled their refusal to answer certain questions from 'non-specialist' reporters, matters simplified remarkably. Basically, all the average hack had to do was wait for the mandatory post-match interview, pull the personal question pin, and — Instant Outburst.

Soon, they didn't even have to do that: merely *mentioning* British journalism was enough to set off hugely readable denunciations of Fleet Street and all its denizens, particularly from John ('I'm talking about the Press') McEnroe. More than one paper took the easy option and printed a post-match McEnroe interview verbatim, as the *London Standard* did on 3 July this year.

Meanwhile, the quality journalists covered the Outburst differently, preferring to analyse its background (Catherine Bell in *Time Out*), or offer themselves as mediator between the warring parties: ('I was looking for McEnroe and the English press to bury the hatchet' lamented Arthur Ashe in the *Sunday Times*.)

Pity the poor colour journalist if they ever do: the BBC's Gerry Williams, who specialises in intimate aftermatch exchanges in front of their plastic shrubbery, would be lost for words. When Mac exited in three hasty sets last week, Williams could hardly wait to pose the real question — whether the press were to blame (the tabloid wind-up) — followed closely by his insistence that they weren't (the quality wind-down). Having absolutely infuriated the dejected loser (not least by an ill-judged comparison with himself), Williams then had the colossal gall to announce: 'This constant sniping that takes place between a section of the press and McEnroe is souring the game'.

Hopeful readers might still imagine that all this self-examination would enable the British media to put their house in order, Wimbledon-wise. And indeed this year's writing on the Championships' coverage produced some notable insights: Catherine Bell on the tabloids' replacement of specialist writers with door-stepping 'generalists'; the *Sunday Times* backgrounder on how Wimbledon is televised; and Julian Barnes's eloquent aside in the *Observer* on BBC race coding ('samba skills' for black footballers, 'artistry' for Amritraj v Noah).

But somehow this second meagre compensation for the *Sun*'s state-of-the-art sexist racism: 'China doll Hu Na put herself on the international map as she swept aside 18-year-old English rose Annabel Croft. Hu Na looked a real dinky chinky as she twice broke Annabel to take the first set 6-3.' Or the Beeb's notorious nationalism: 'Ann, I can't help thinking what John Lloyd's victory last night has done for Jo Durie, for all of us.' 'Yes, Dan, it's really helped the British nation.' Or the blatant way that the Royal Box was used, first to stage the Tebbits' appearance on the day that the Brighton bombing charges were announced — and then to deny the Royal Marriage Rift ('As Becker Faced Curren, Princess Michael Faced the World' — the *Daily Record*).

Wimbledon's Centre Court has often been compared to a theatre, upon which politicians and pop stars are as likely to pose for the cameras as the competing athletes. Mrs Thatcher's efforts to muscle in on the proceedings began with her unscheduled arrival at the launch of *Lloyd on Lloyd*, her daughter's blow-by-blow account of the personal lives of the re-united pair, and continued all the way to the Ladies' Final. It was some small consolation that the Conservatives' defeat at Brecon and Radnor neatly coincided with that of the Men's Champion. Both Scarfe and Trog drew the obvious comparison — the Prime Minister in the famous headband of the press's favourite loser. □

New Statesman Index

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Barry Cohen

Tel Aviv

If Israel were ever to be integrated with the surrounding Arab states, Tel Aviv could well fill the vacuum left by the destruction of pre-civil war Beirut. With the exception of casinos, it seems to have all the essential attractions to qualify as an eastern Mediterranean playground. What it could never replace, of course, is Beirut's former elegance, even sensuality, that proved to be one of the more lasting effects of France's brief colonial rule in Lebanon. Yet, major street names in Tel Aviv, such as Allenby and King George, bear witness to its *own* colonial past.

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Perhaps the predominant European influence derives from the wave of German immigrants fleeing Nazism who settled here in the 1930s. Commonly known as 'Yekkes', these industrious Central Europeans clearly left their imprint on the city's architecture and café life. Walking around the older residential quarters of town leaves me with the distinct impression that Tel Aviv must be one of the last great repositories of Bauhaus architecture. The frequency of little squares, parks and boulevards reflects the social-democratic ideals of the early residents and their attempts to create a rational, popular scale of urban living.

○

Like New Yorkers, Tel Aviv's inhabitants snobbishly regard the rest of the country as a mere hinterland. Although the country's citizenry views Tel Aviv as noisy, brash and crowded, the locals are quite convinced that those who cannot appreciate the city's energy and urbanity are obviously incorrigible provincials. Special contempt is reserved for the sanctimonious Jerusalemites. A current joke circulating around Tel Aviv's cafés concerns the recent introduction of the 'Denver Clamp' by the traffic police. During a one-month initial trial in Jerusalem, the system appeared to be working quite well. It was then introduced to Tel Aviv, whereupon 15 people managed to dismantle it on the first day.

○

Living with an annual inflation rate of 400 per cent is guaranteed to keep the consumer alert. Supermarket staff seem pre-occupied changing price labels to ensure that they are up-to-date. As the shekel declines, the hunger for dollars increases. By paying for our rented flat with coveted 'greenbacks', we manage to obtain a 30 per cent discount. It almost seems as though every shop owner is ready to exchange dollars at the current black market rate. The practice is now so widespread that one has only to turn to the front page of the leading newspaper *Yediot Aharanot*, where the latest unofficial rate is conveniently listed each day.

○

A former *New Statesman* correspondent in Jerusalem, Amnon Kapeliouk, appears to be in trouble with the authorities. The Attorney General has decided to bring charges against him for illegally visiting Jordan last March. According to the country's Defence Emergency Regulations in force since 1948, Israeli citizens are barred from entering certain Arab countries without the prior permission of the Interior Ministry. In recent years, Kapeliouk has earned hostility from hard-liners for travelling to places where other Israeli journalists have never trod. During the Israeli siege of Beirut in 1982, he entered the city as a *Le Monde* reporter to interview Yassar Arafat. The following year, he accepted a PLO invitation to be the first Israeli journalist to cover a meeting of the Palestine National Council, which was held in Algiers.

Following his attendance at the most recent PNC meeting in Amman last November, Kapeliouk was warned about the legal consequences of journalistic forays into 'enemy' territory. Responding to this latest threat, he has hinted that the Attorney General is pandering to demands from right-wing parties in the national unity government who have called for Kapeliouk's prosecution in the past. Even more to the point, he believes this decision will harm Israel's favourable reputation abroad for its extensive freedom of the press. On this issue, he has undoubtedly touched upon a sensitive aspect of the country's self-image. Despite a state of semi-permanent hostilities with its neighbours, Israeli military censorship has been remarkably restrained.

ROGER WODDIS

The weakest Lynk

The breakaway union of Nottinghamshire miners led by Roy Lynk has been recognised by the National Coal Board

The miners' flag is red or blue,
Depending on your point of view;
What still inspires the Welsh and Scots
Has vanished at a rate of Notts.
But let us temper our dismay
At those who join the breakaway;
A chain, whatever some may think,
Is stronger than its weakest Lynk.

With solemn pledges swear they all
To fill their pockets till they fall;
Come TUC or NUM,
This song shall mark the end of them.
Then raise the harlot standard high,
Surrender means the last goodbye;
Though miners wince and some despair,
They'll keep the white flag flying there.

While other lads are loyal still,
They bow before MacGregor's will;
What counts, when all is said and done,
Is being lauded by the *Sun*.
Then let their masters jump for joy,
What's good for them is good for Roy;
They may dispute the going price,
But thirty pieces will suffice.

○

On a hot humid Saturday afternoon, we have lunch with old friends at their flat in the artists' quarter of Jaffa. One of the guests, Dr Eli Lasch, who is director of health services in the Gaza Strip, invites us to join him there next day to gain some further insights into this extremely congested Palestinian ghetto. Unlike the Wild West Bank, the resistance in the Gaza Strip has never really recovered since Ariel Sharon launched a massive counter-insurgency offensive in the early 1970s. As a classic Israeli liberal, Lasch is caught up in a dilemma: while resenting the Israeli occupation of conquered territories, he believes that the opportunity to improve conditions for the Palestinian refugees must be seized as long as a peace settlement remains elusive.

○

After 12 years in Gaza, Lasch has forged the makings of an impressive medical system, ranging from a network of primary health care centres to the construction of advanced surgical units. In doing so, he has had to combat frequent opposition from the military administration as well as initial suspicions on the part of the Palestinian medical staff. At the mental clinic, which occupies a former opthalmic hospital, a small revolution in psychiatric care is under way. Previously, in the traditional Islamic society of Gaza, an individual suffering from mental illness was regarded as possessed by demons which could only be cured by a religious leader. Under the direction of a British-trained Palestinian psychiatrist, Dr Eyad, patients are treated within a concept of community mental health, based on the dignity of the individual.

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At the end of the day, as we are leaving the main medical compound to return to Tel Aviv, the sentry at the gate motions us to drive in the opposite direction. Looking back at the suddenly empty street, we notice a car with its doors and boot open. The military suspect a car bomb. Eighteen years after the arrival of the Israeli army in Gaza, the struggle goes on.

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Novosti

Soviet Communist Party Central Committee pays its last respects to Chernenko: then the purge of his associates resumed

PURGE TIME IN MOSCOW

Until this month no Politburo member had been sacked for seven years and no central party secretary for twenty. ANDY McSMITH analyses the motives behind the Gorbachev shakeout

THE WEST loves novelty and was frankly bored with the old grey men in the Kremlin. So when there emerged as the new General Secretary a dynamic, youngish man with a photogenic wife — a man confident enough to joke with reporters and go on walkabouts in city centres — the 'experts', in an outburst of wishful thinking, told us that a new generation of 'young' men was sweeping the old lot aside.

The definition of 'young' has had to be stretched to take in anyone under 65. This week the analysis has it that Foreign Secretary Andrei Gromyko has been shunted aside into the Presidency so that General Secretary Gorbachev can take personal charge of Soviet foreign policy.

The only 'evidence' for this supposition is that Gromyko is 75. The fact is that the job into which he has been 'shunted' is so highly prized that his three predecessors in it were Chernenko, Andropov and Brezhnev. Common sense says that in reality Gromyko has been promoted.

If the old men were a spent force in Soviet politics, what are we make of E.P.Slasky (87 next birthday), who is minister in charge of nuclear power; or Klavdi Bogoliubov, who was picked to run the Party's General Department at the age of 75? Marshal Sokolov (73) cannot have been the youngest candidate for his new job as defence minister — though he is nine years younger than one of his deputy ministers. Indeed Chairman Gromyko is nine years younger than his vice-chairman. There is simply no evidence for the idea that a generation of officials in late middle age have suddenly united against the older men who gave them their jobs. The idea has no political logic behind it.

What has happened is that the nationwide purge of corrupt or inefficient administrators, which was inaugurated by Yuri Andropov but slowed down during Konstantin Chernenko's brief regime, has now resumed its former pace. The local party boss in the Krasnodar region of South Russia is not satisfied yet that he has cleaned up his patch, but he reveals that 'hundreds' of executives there have been 'severely punished' in the past two years. This is in just one of more than 120 regions in the USSR.

The first Secretary of the Kirghiz CP has been more specific, announcing that in four years, 1,100 communists have been expelled from the party in that Central Asian republic for corruption, abuse of office, or similar offences. If such a toll is typical of the whole USSR, it would imply that around 150,000 party members, just under one per cent of the total, have been hit by the Andropov-Gorbachev purge.

The institutions which have benefitted most from this process have been the KGB and the Party Organisation department, run by the little known Egor Ligachev (65), who has emerged as Gorbachev's second in command. Specialists in party organisation, or cadre work, are not popular; there is a caustic portrait of one of them in Solzhenitsyn's best novel, *Cancer Ward*. In the past few weeks local party secretaries in Armenia, Uzbekistan and the industrial province of Sverdlovsk have all been replaced by inspectors from Ligachev's department.

Meanwhile, the KGB has never featured so prominently within the Politburo, whose 13 members include the current KGB chairman and two former KGB officers — Geidar Aliev (62), a candidate for the job of Prime Minister, and the newly appointed Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze (57), who hails from Geogia. By contrast, the Defence Minister, Marshal Sokolov, is only a candidate member of the politburo. Since Gorbachev's main rival, Grigori Romanov (62), was propelled this month into political obscurity there is now no party specialist in defence matters on the Politburo.

THE KEY POINT is that the Soviet system has banned *politics*. Pressure groups in or out of the communist party are not allowed to organise openly or publish manifestos. What has always happened, since Stalin's day, is that semi-secret political 'families' are formed by groups of like-thinking bureaucrats who have worked together successfully.

The most famous example of recent years has been the 'Dnieper family'. At the start of 1982, five out of 13 full members of the Politburo and three heads of departments at party headquarters, three deputy prime ministers, the Minister for the Interior, all three deputy chairmen of the KGB, many of the most senior officials in the Ukraine, and numerous others, particularly those in charge of ferrous metallurgy, had all either worked in the Dnepropetrovsk region of the Ukraine in the 1940s, or in Moldavia in the 1950s.

Most were graduates of the Dnepropetrovsk Metallurgical Institute, whose old boys included Brezhnev, the ageing Soviet Prime Minister, Nikolai Tikhonov (80), and the current KGB chairman, Viktor Chebrikov. Chernenko was from the Moldavian branch of the family.

Gorbachev is a native of Stravopol province,

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where he was regional First Secretary until 1978. The man he says he admired most was Yuri Andropov, who was born in the same province. Gorbachev's big break came when the former party secretary in charge of agriculture, Fyodor Kulakov, died suddenly, creating a vacancy at the top which Gorbachev filled.

Kulakov, too had been First Secretary of the Stravopol provincial committee. After the 1930s purges, Stravopol was controlled by Mikhail Suslov, who was the Kremlin's chief ideologist through the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years. Egor Ligachev was among the officials promoted by Suslov.

The A Team

1 Mikhail Gorbachev (54), Politburo member since 1980; General Secretary of the CPSU since 10 March 1985.

2 Egor Ligachev (65), party secretary in charge of the Organisation depatment since 1983; Politburo member since 23 April 1985.

3 Andrei Gromyko (75), Politburo member since 1973; Chairman of the Praesidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet since 2 July 1985.

4 Geidar Aliev (62), First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Politburo member since November 1982; the first of the USSR's Shi'ite minority to reach this level.

5 Vitali Vorotnikov (59), Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federal Republic and Politburo member since 1983.

6 Nikolai Ryzhkov (55), Party secretary in charge of the Economic department since 1983; Politburo member since 23 April 1985.

7 Mikhail Solomentsev (72), Chairman of the Party Control Commission and Politburo member since 1983.

8 Eduard Shevardnadze (57), Politburo member since 1 July 1985, and USSR Foreign Minister since 2 July.

The elderly Suslov is reputed to have had a terrible argument in January 1982 with KGB General Tsvigun, Brezhnev's brother-in-law, about the growing evidence of corruption and extravagance within the Dnieper family — so serious that Tsvigun committed suicide. Suslov subsequently collapsed and died.

One explanation of subsequent events is that the Stravopol family then began a ruthless and successful war against their Dnieper rivals — nearly all of whom, with the notable exception of KGB General Chebrikov, have been sacked, pensioned off, or politically isolated. (The most prominent victim of the purges was former Interior Minister General Nikolai Shchelokov, a friend of Brezhnev for 50 years, and of Chernenko for 30 years, who was sacked, expelled from the party, stripped of his rank and arrested. He died in unexplained circumstances last December, even while his old friend Chernenko was nominally in control.)

There must be an explanation as to why the Dnieper family should collapse so suddenly, not even reviving when Chernenko held the General Secretaryship. It is probably connected with the fact that their shared experience was in supervising grand construction projects and rebuilding cities which had been devastated by the war.

The sectors in which they specialised — heavy industry, the party machine and the police — had been high on every party leader's set of priorities, most of all Stalin's. But the Dnieper family had no experience of reorganising or revitalising a sluggish bureaucracy.

The famous Brezhnev method of leaving everyone to get on with their job until they dropped dead produced its benefits for more than a decade, but the steady growth in the Soviet economy peaked around 1977-78 — and has now slowed to two thirds of what it was a decade ago. It is becoming increasingly difficult to extract enough from the Soviet economy to meet consumer expectations and to keep up with Reagan's manic increase in arms spending.

Stravopol, on the other hand, has bred specialists in agriculture, since it has some of the richest soil in the USSR. The Strevopol family have also specialised in foreign affairs. On Stalin's death, there was no channel through which the communist party could become directly involved in foreign poicy, since Comintern had been abolished and its successor, Cominform, was defunct.

The Eastern European states were being run like conquered territory by the army and the police. The Foreign Minister, V.M.Molotov, was opposed to the withdrawal of troops from Austria, or the resumption of relations with Yugoslavia or Japan, and believed that a nuclear war could be won. There was a gap here for officials smart enough to move in.

IN 1954, an International Department of the communist party was founded. Its head then and ever since has been Boris Ponomarev (80). In 1957, Yuri Andropov was given the job of creating from scratch another department to liase with the Eastern European communist parties. In the same year, Gromyko became Foreign Minister.

Among the party officials seconded to the Foreign Ministry to replace diplomats trained by Molotov were Vasili Kuznetsov (84), the current vice-president of the USSR; Mikhail Zimyanin (71), now party secretary in charge of propaganda; Nikolai Patolichev (76), now USSR Minister for Foreign Trade; General Alexei Epishev (77), now head of the Political Administration of the army and navy; and Sergei Lapin (73), who now controls television and radio. Ponomarev, Patolichev and Epishev are perhaps the only officials still in office who are known to have been personally involved in Stalin's purges.

The Soviets think that they deserve a better press in the West, so let us end on a hopeful note. The dissident writer, Roy Medvedev, has claimed that there is a trend he calls the 'party democrats' among those officials whose political views were formed after 1956.

Gorbachev, Ligachev and their like are not 'party democrats'. They come, in fact, from a tradition which is close to being Stalinist; but 'party democrats' may benefit from the space being created at the top by the current round of blood letting. Mikhail Gorbachev may yet join that band of Russian heroes — from Ivan the Terrible to Vladimir Lenin — whose very rough methods brought progress. □

Andy McSmith is a journalist working full-time for The Labour Party.

ZIMBABWE

MUGABE GETS AN UNHAPPY ELECTION RESULT

HOWARD BARRELL looks at the problems facing the government after general elections that have shown the country to be more divided against itself than ever

Harare

IF YOU DRIVE out of Harare along Samora Machel Avenue, pass the Golden Remington Razor (alias the new multi-million pound Sheraton Hotel) and keep winding your way southwest through the veld for about 300 miles, you eventually reach the depression known as Bulawayo, Joshua Nkomo's Ndebele base, the sad epitome of the coincidence of Zimbabwe's party and tribal divisions. Sadly — and no longer dismissable as the mischievous concoction of the bourgeois journalist's imagination — tribalism is the political reality of Zimbabwe today.

It was the critical determinent of Zimbabwe's first post-independence general election: Shonas (Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF) 63 seats, with one more to come; Ndebeles (Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU) 15; the Ndou Shona clan (Ndabiningi Sithole's ZANU) 1; pure whites (Ian Smith's Conservative Alliance Zimbabwe) 15; coloureds, Indians and well-healed whites (Independents) 5. Out for the count is the testy little Bishop Muzorewa and his UANC, who had challenged for the Shona vote, together with various other obscure groupings.

Tribalism alone cannot be blamed for this lack of national unity. Narrowly conceived political tactics employed by various of the parties are additional factors. For Mugabe, the outcome of the poll has been a bitter disappointment. To his mind, both the whites and Ndebeles have spurned his hand of reconciliation. Most whites, by all appearances, took what Mugabe had to give — national peace, labour peace, a good salary or profit margin, marred only by the requirement that they tolerate ritual Socialist rhetoric — and saw no need to give anything in return.

For many Ndebeles, Mugabe's hand had long been a fist, particularly after ZAPU arms caches were uncovered in Matabeleland in 1982 and heavy troop concentrations acted ruthlessly to crush dissidents.

Mugabe has been stung, as evidenced by his startlingly harsh labelling of whites as 'racists', 'wicked witches' and the like after they had given the bluff-and-be-damned Smith 15 of the 20 reserved white seats.

White agricultural and business notables had gathered themselves into the Independent Zimbabwe Group (IZG) after deserting Smith in order to develop a relationship with Mugabe better suited to protecting their property. But they could not deliver what they promised — a white electorate matured beyond the racism of

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the war years and prepared to demonstrate an enlightened self-interest. Instead, the whites voted for the nose-diving World War II pilot who led Southern Rhodesia into UDI and the liberation war that left between 30,000 and 60,000 dead.

The Independents' defections from Smith's Rhodesia Front (then Republican Front, now CAZ) and a couple of by-election victories had left Smith with only seven of the 20 white seats he had won just before independence by the time this election was called.

If some of Mugabe's zealous lieutenants had hoped their use of the military stick had beaten the Ndebeles into a submissive accommodation with ZANU-PF, they had been proven wholly wrong. If anything, the anti-dissident campaign appears to have strengthened ZAPU in Matabeleland.

Likewise, if they or Mugabe had hoped that former ZAPU UN representative Callistus Ndlovu, who defected to Mugabe's party two years ago and became Minister of Mines, could deliver some portion of the Matabeleland vote, they were mistaken. Ndlovu was humiliated at the polls by Isaac Nyati, an economist and senior ZAPU official who had spent more than a year in detention after the arms caches were uncovered. The humiliation suffered in Matabeleland by the other senior Ndebele member of ZANU-PF, Minister of National supplies Enos Nkala, was only slightly less painful.

For Mugabe, too, the Matabeleland result was a personal slap in the face. He had opened his election campaign with an extensive speaking tour of the province and returned there just before the four days of polling. His hopes of reconciliation and of building a nation were disappointed. As he noted after the results, this is a dangerous situation for Zimbabwe, given regional tensions and the neighbouring South African Botha government's nose for opportunities to exploit.

But Mugabe's often harsh rhetoric against Nkomo and ZAPU does not seem to have helped break down barriers. Rather, it has seemed to bolster a ZAPU which has shown little ability to develop a creative response to the Zimbabwean situation. Political observers wonder why Mugabe's political style has not been characterised by more confidence and subtlety.

Some members of the Left in Mugabe's party were saying before the election that, if their party did badly in Matabeleland, ironically this might improve the prospects for the resolution of what they call Zimbabwe's national question. Their reasoning was that it could force ZANU-PF to reach a realistic accomodation with Nkomo and ZAPU. The preliminaries would be a public condemnation of dissidents from Nkomo, a favourable public response from Mugabe and the re-opening of long-stalled unity talks between the two major black parties. These steps would be designed to create the political conditions under which a substantial economic development programme in Matabeleland could be mounted as the basis for overcoming the apparent Ndebele sense of alienation.

THE MILITARY SOLUTION has clearly not worked in Matabeleland. So now, it is being argued, the time has come to try political and economic tactics. The argument is compelling. The two critical factors are, however, in doubt: the will and the means.

Mugabe announced early this week that he would be appointing only ZANU-PF parliamentarians to his new Cabinet. And he shows no signs of wanting to work with Nkomo and ZAPU, for whom he has clearly little respect.

But, of more importance — not only to solving this immediate national question, but also to Zimbabwe's overall direction — is the lack of means. Although Zimbabwe's economy is showing signs of an upturn, notably in export earnings, early next year the country will again be approaching the International Monetary Fund for a special facility. The IMF had suspended the previous facility granted to Zimbabwe because the country had not followed its prescriptions, including its demands for reducing governmentexpenditure.

This appears to rule out the possibility that the government could, if it wanted to, engage in any substantial economic development programme in Matabeleland. The prospects of a significant swing to the Left, which Mugabe announced as his plan following the election, and prospects of building Socialism along Marxist-Leninist lines also look dim.

But if Zimbabwe does not go to the IMF the only alternative source of funds for government expenditure is Zimbabwe's narrow tax base — supported in large measure by 'Whitey' and his businesses. And the confidence of this sector, never happy with all this talk of socialism, is somewhat shaken after the purple phrases about 'wicked witches' and the like.

The more level headed members of the white community doubt that Mugabe will take any generalised action against them, or deprive them of their considerable comforts. But Smith, his CAZ and their supporters will come under close scrutiny from the government. And woe betide any white, said Mugabe, who shows at home, factory or in general behaviour that he or she still thinks Zimbabwe is white-ruled Rhodesia.

Much bilateral western aid, too, is likely to be implicitly conditional upon the continuing comfort of white kith and kin. So Mugabe, although he spoke out strongly against continuing with the 20 reserved white seats, might still go for discretion rather than overturning the Lancaster House constitution. Until 1987, he can get rid of the white seats only by a unanimous vote in the House of Assembly. After that, he would require a 70 per cent vote in the Assembly, plus two thirds support in the Senate.

Nonetheless, he said last Saturday that he wanted to get rid of these seats 'almost immediately' and western countries could 'go hang' if they did not like it. It irks him, black Zimbabweans and a significant number of liberal whites that some 32,000 white voters should elect 20 seats, whereas on average that same number of black voters sends only one MP to parliament.

Although the ruling party kept its ideal of a one-party state off the main election agenda, Mugabe has said he reads the poll outcome as indication that Zimbabweans want only one party. But Mugabe looked very tired at his post-election press conference. Despite Zimbabwe's significant achievements over the past five years, he seemed aware that the problems he now faces are as daunting as his election victory was resounding — and that they are little different from what they were when he came to power in 1980 with six less seats.

Their essence is still how to build a nation. □

THE ANCIENT WISDOM

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INDIA

BHOPAL VICTIMS JOIN WORKERS AGAINST CARBIDE

As the US multinational pulls out, MICHAEL JACOBS reports on a campaign to make Union Carbide face up to its social and moral responsibilities

WORKERS at the Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, India, where up to 15,000 people were killed and 200,000 injured in the MIC poison gas disaster last December, are now fighting for an Alternative Plan for safe and socially-useful production at the site — under workers' control.

This Wednesday Union Carbide closed the plant, dismissing all 632 employees (400 contract staff had already been sacked when the main operation stopped after the accident). Ostensibly the closure has been forced on Carbide by the Indian government's refusal to renew its industrial licence. In reality the American mulitnational is keen to leave Bhopal to wash its hands of responsibility for the disaster.

While protracted legal wrangling over compensation drags on in the United States (no money has yet been paid to victims), the company has been able to continue business as normal. As one of its directors said, quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*: 'the financial structure of the company isn't affected in any way'.

For the Bhopal workers, the closure only adds unemployment to the previous suffering of the innocent. Already 20,000 gas-affected people have been too badly injured to retain their jobs. With no social security, most have been left destitute. 'What was the point of battling against death by MIC poisoning if we are going to die of starvation anyway?' asked one.

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The Alternative Plan, conceived in outline by workers at the factory, envisages jobs there for both gas victims and Carbide employees. A coalition of trade unions, victims, relief committees and environmental groups has now come together with three main demands: that Union Carbide withdraws the closure notice, negotiates with representatives of the workers and gas victims on the handing over of the factory — along with a lump sum for investment in alternative production — and continues to pay the workers' wages until a settlement is reached. They are calling for international support for their campaign.

The plan, even in its as yet embryonic form, is the first of its kind in India. It embodies the idea of workers' control and forms of trade union and community organisation, which are a radical departure from traditional labour movement norms. In the first months after the accident many of the gas victims were hostile to the Carbide workers, regarding them as 'responsible'.

The ecological groups which took up the Bhopal issue as a campaign against dangerous and environmentally-degrading pesticides (and the whole concept of industrialised agriculture) failed to take any account of the workers' interests or the need for jobs, demanding straightforward closure of the plant. The two unions with interests in the factory, one affiliated to the ruling Congress(I) party, the other independent, frequently seemed mainly in competition with each other.

One of the first initiatives towards bridging the divisions in fact came from a newly-formed federation of independent unions in Bombay, which in March formed the Trade Unions' Relief Committee for the Gas Victims of Bhopal (TURF). This was itself an unprecedented extension of union co-operation. TURF set up a Relief Centre in the heart of the MIC-affected area in Bhopal, drawing in Carbide workers as well as doctors and others as volunteers.

The Centre gives outpatient treatment and respiratory physiotherapy, has a women's health care and children's nutritional supplement scheme and a general health education programme. The links between workers and victims developed in the Centre became the basis for the Alternative Plan.

IT WAS the closure notice, issued in April, which galvanised a group of the workers to form the 'Workers' Committee for Planning Alternative Production' — initially with little support from their union. One young employee designed a questionnaire to find out the skills, experience and aspirations of the workforce.

A survey was carried out of the gas victims' response to the idea of alternative production. Within a few days over 10,000 signatures had been collected in support of the Plan. The ideas for non-hazardous and socially-useful production include soya-based foods (soya is grown in the area), dairy products, portable oxygen respirators and other medical equipment for victims, and pollution control apparatus. Smaller-scale co-operatives manufacturing boilersuits, dusters and clothes and other goods for local needs are also envisaged.

The campaign for the implementation of the Plan needs to be international if it is to succeed. With 51 per cent of its Indian subsidiary's equity, it is Union Carbide Corporation which decides what will happen. The Workers' Committee has appealed to Carbide and other unions in the US and Europe to support them. Last week three unionists from the Bhopal Campaign arrived in Britain to seek support, after a successful tour of factories in the US.

The British trade union movement has in general been slow to react to the Bhopal tragedy. At a meeting in London last week of the British Bhopal Victims Support Committee (originally set up by the Southall Monitoring Group, now expanded to include a range of unionists, development groups, environmentalists and community activists), a Bhopal Trade Union Solidarity Group was set up. It is appealing to all trade unions — and other organisations — to write to Union Carbide's British headquarters in Sheffield protesting against the closure of the Bhopal factory and in support of the Alternative Plan, and to provide money for the Bhopal workers' 'fighting fund' to maintain their campaign now that their wages have been stopped.*

In Bhopal, the pressure on the workers and victims is intense. Last week 278 people were arrested at a demonstration against the closure. Police have stormed and broken up a relief clinic set up inside the factory gates, arresting the doctor on a criminal charge. □

**Letters to Union Carbide UK Head Office: Fountain Precinct, Balm Green, Sheffield S1 3AE. Money for Carbide workers' fighting fund: Bhopal Trade Union Solidarity Group, c/o Transnationals Information Centre, 54 Ayres St, London SE1 1EU, tel 01-403 7550.*

WEST GERMANY

WAKE UP OR DIE, EUROPE

Tony Catterall on a visionary cry for socialists to shake up the giant

Bonn

JUST AS the credibility of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's European policy is sinking under the contradictions of grandiose plans for European unity combined with Germany vetoing the EEC Commission proposals for negligible price reductions for grain, West Germany's Social Democratic Party has rediscovered Europe as a political idea.

The SPD plans to publish in September a 'Manifesto for a New European Left' which will expand on ideas put forward in Bonn last week by party general manager (the equivalent of the Labour Party general secretary) Peter Glotz — who as an intellectual is both admired and detested within the party. Speaking as 'a member of a sometimes still imaginary, in any case not very effectively and systematically organised, European Left', Glotz told the Political Club of the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (the SPD's think tank) that there were 'irrefutable grounds for a Europeanisation of our policies'.

These grounds lay in the fields of the economy and culture: in the loss of power of national economics through the emergence of trans-national finance markets; and the threat to the 'European identity' through the development of new international media.

'We must recognise that the individual states have suffered a radical loss of power,' Glotz said. This is why democratic governments — Left or Right — while in opposition promise the elimination of unemployment, the reduction of inflation or hefty economic growth and then in government are often unable to realise them.

The last Social Democrat Chancellor in West Germany, Helmut Schmidt, had estimated that with all the instruments of national economic policies at his disposal he had control over at most 30 per cent of what was happening to the economy. 'Today 4,534 international companies with their headquarters in the European Community control around 50,000 works outside their homelands,' Glotz said. 'It would be hard to deny that the plans of these firms often more effectively determine what will happen in an economy than do the plans of any government.'

Of a greater effect, though, was the development of the international finance markets after the collapse of the Bretton Woods monetary system. The present international mobility of capital meant that Keynesianism in one country was impossible.

Glotz's second point, which 'the European Left must deal with', concerns the development of the new media and the 'political-economic forms in which these new technologies will be applied'. In most parts of Europe today, people had three or four television programmes available; the next decade would bring a 'Babylonian multiplication' of voices.

'It is open which message, which picture, will force its way into the head of the European worker over the complicated channel systems of the future,' Glotz said. 'And this presents the greatest threat to the independence of the European culture, or rather the European cultures.'

Europe must make a contribution to international politics as a 'deliverer of ideas.' But there was no sense in trying to become another superpower. 'European culture, from Niccolo Pisano to Goethe to Sören Kierkgaard, from Fritz Lang to Neils Bohr, came often from second-rank states. . .Europe can be powerful, when power is not understood as MIRVed missiles; and when it pulls itself together into a new self-confidence.'

The neo-conservative political leadership in Western Europe today was delivering the continent over to American hegemony, because they could not draft an alternative picture of a functioning politico-economic Europe. 'They want to handle the laws of the market like the laws of nature,' Glotz said. It produced the 'Arthur Scargill effect, which could be roughly described as: 'Why do we need the Americans? We're strong enough to make ourselves small.'

It was all uncertain, he said. 'Only one thing is certain: Europe is at present a helpless and silent continent, without social vision and without a historical mission. A sleeping giant, but one which shrinks in its sleep.' □

The New Statesman *plans to reprint extracts from Peter Glotz's address in a later edition.*

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LETTERS

The way we were

Catherine Thackray, Birkby, Huddersfield

Peter Kellner (*NS* 5 July) reveals how the Labour establishment approached the landslide victory of 1945. But they were elected by people who saw things very differently. I was one of them.

At 24, I was in the ATS and this was my first experience of an election. Like many others I kept in touch with the outside world via newspapers, radio and journals — in my case the *New Statesman* (a subscription to it was a 21st birthday present and I once found a note in my locker 'I see you are a *NS* reader, so am I — get in touch'). There was also the admirable ABCA (Army Bureau of Current Affairs) which became a forum for much political discussion. We had no doubts that we were voting for a socialist government which would change society and not the 'moderate party of national unity' apparently envisaged by Labour leaders. We hardly noticed them. It was Kingsley Martin, Michael Foot, Tom Driberg, Konni Zilliacus and above all Aneurin Bevan who had educated and inspired us.

Back at home our parents voted 'for Churchill', and I suspect that Churchill supporters were mainly civilians. The postal vote was of crucial importance and we were encouraged to use it. People in the services had had five years of regimentation. The vote was our only way of expressing revolt.

The Laski bogey was a shocking campaign. When I became a student at LSE I was surprised to find how mild he was after all that the press had implied. Peter Kellner is right to see him as 'an intellectual 1940s version of Tony Benn'. However, in one thing Laski was lucky. His period of vilification by the press was relatively short; both Tony Benn and Arthur Scargill have endured a relentless media campaign against them for years.

False utopia

Howard Harris & Alan Lipman, Cardiff

What is the *New Statesman* up to? Readers of Jules Lubbock's eulogy of Alice Coleman's *Utopia on Trial: Vision and Reality in Planned Housing* (*NS* 28 June) might well be excused for taking this as an exemplar; as a model for a humane, a democratic, even a socialist approach to housing. They should be warned.

Coleman's study — untouched, apparently, by some three decades of intense debate about social theory, concepts and methods — must surely stand as one of the most reactionary products of recent research in housing. Consider the issues on which Lubbock is silent. What, for instance, are we to make of her claim that housing design is an 'ultimate cause' of unemployment? What are we to make of her 'solution' to the housing problem: that the unregulated play of market forces alone can provide the home-in-a-garden which, seemingly, each of us covets?

And what are we to make of Jules Lubbock — despair of the gimcrack architecture of consumer capitalism has, it seems, distorted critical awareness.

Prison eyewash

Andy Erlam, London SE10

Peter Downton's letter about the Prison Medical Service (*NS* 5 July) completely misses the point. Good medical services to prisoners will not become a reality simply with more resources. The point is that at the moment the Home Office pays the bill and prisoners are not free to have the doctor of their choice under the National Health Service. As long as this odd arrangement continues, the integrity of medical services in prison will always be in doubt. There are dozens of incidents in prison, known to the public, where the role of the prison doctor has been crucial. It has been obvious that in many cases the care of the patient has come second to support of the prison establishment. The Prison Medical Service will not escape repeated criticism until it faces the main issue: integration with normal health services. In the meantime pleas for more resources will be recognised for what they are: eyewash.

Martin Wright, London SW2

Peter Downton's letter is a depressing example of professionals putting their professional concerns before those of their clients or patients. Mr Downton's argument boils down to: there are many people being sent to prison who ought to be receiving mental treatment instead; there aren't enough medical officers to cope; therefore we need more medical officers. Surely as professionals they should be using their clout to prevent these unfortunate people being sent to prison at all? When will prison medical officers join together to raise an outcry about this misuse of prisons? The answer probably is: when they are no longer employed by the Prison Department.

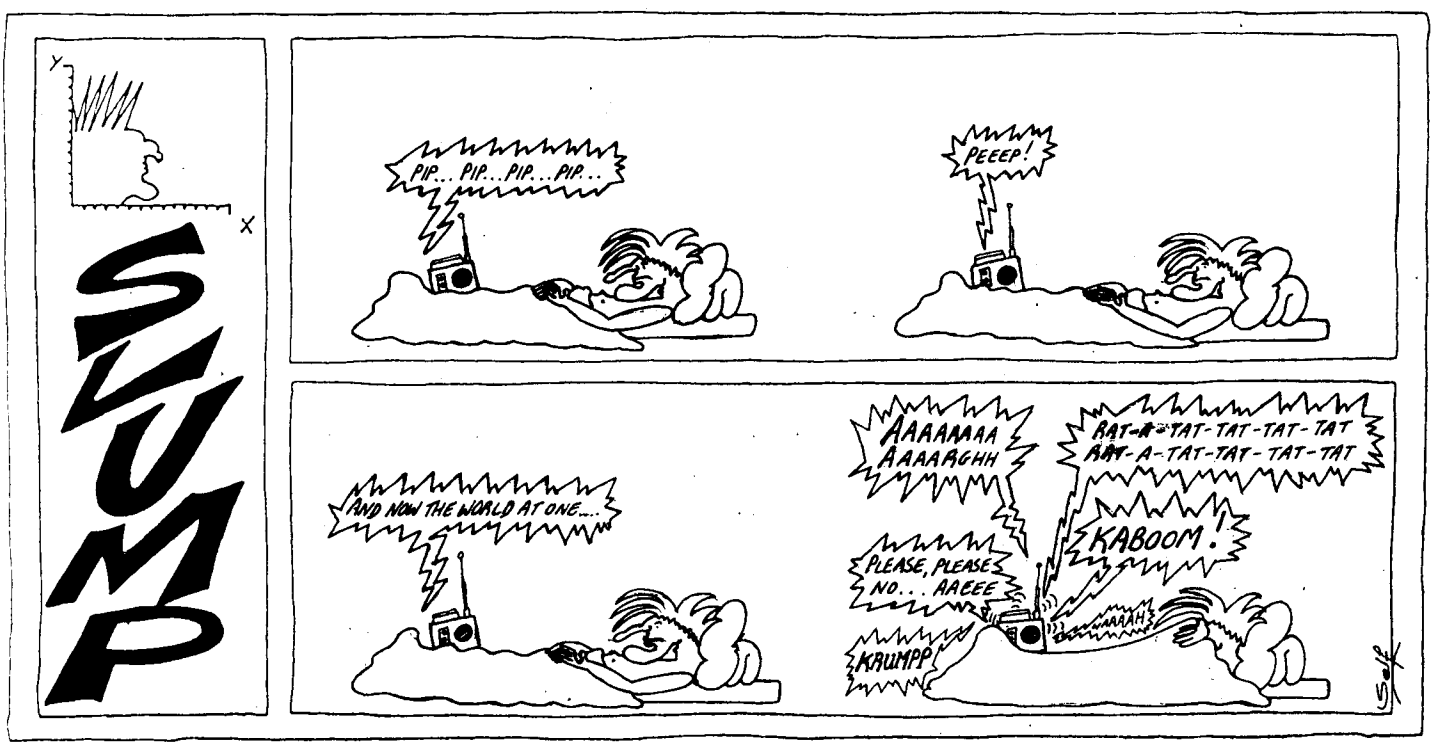
Islington cares?

Dave Burn, Branch Secretary NALGO, Islington Branch

Following your article (*NS* 24 May) and the letter from Islington Council's Chair of Personnel (*NS* 21 June), I am writing on behalf of Islington NALGO to clarify the main issues involved in the Islington Housing Dept racial harassment cases.

The *New Statesman* article was quite right to point out the trival and offensive way in which the national press has so far dealt with the issues. Without exception the 'popular' dailies have condoned racist attitudes and behaviour and supported the Council employees who have been found guilty of racial harassment and discrimination within the Council's disciplinary procedures. One NALGO member who had originally complained of harassment at work instead found herself harassed at home by freelance and *Daily Mail* journalists.

Another instructive aspect of the whole case has been how the leader of the SDP opposition in Islington, Councillor David Hyams, has consistently lined up on the same side as the members of staff found guilty of racial harassment and discrimination, complaining about gestapo tactics by both the Council and NALGO. Clearly



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Councillor Hyams is not interested in opposing racism or harassment at work. Within that framework it is easy to understand why personal information regarding NALGO members who had suffered harassment seems to have been leaked to the press by Councillor Hyams.

Now any black worker within Islington Council is going to think twice about complaining about harassment at work, if the result is going to be press exposure and further intimidation and harassment at their home.

NALGO initially asked the Council in January of this year for an investigation of the harassment in the Housing Department. Management had been fully aware of the situation for some considerable time before that but little action was taken until NALGO raised a formal grievance under the Council procedures in late February. Although we recognise the constraints that Islington Council have to operate under, the Branch is disappointed that urgent and decisive action was not taken by the Council earlier.

While we are pleased that the Council disciplinary hearings have recognised that there is an issue of racism within the Housing Dept, there is still a lot that needs to be done within the authority to combat racist activities at work. Within Islington's Housing Department, CRE and Trade Union posters have been ripped down, slashed with knives and defaced with fascist graffiti. Individual members of staff have received threatening phone calls and other attempts at intimidation. In the most extreme case of intimidation certain NALGO members have experienced a car being daubed with paint, a brick being flung through a window and someone outside their house sharpening a collection of knives. Clearly such actions prove that the need for an active anti-racist campaign within Islington Council is very great indeed.

Buy New Zealand. . .

Naomi Forrester, Eastern Suburbs Peace Group, 68 Alexander Street, Howick, Auckland, New Zealand

In your 15 March Diary Islander suggested people should buy New Zealand products. This is the best practical way of supporting us. At the moment the grassroots peace movement here is very strong but also afraid that our government may weaken its policy. We want New Zealand to remain totally nuclear-free and hope our stand may help other countries also. So our peace group has produced green stickers (for use on letters or anywhere else they might be seen) saying 'Buy New Zealand nuclear free goods'. *NS* readers can order these direct from the address above, price £2.50 for 200 surface mail or £4.50 for 200 air mail.

FEEDBACK

A reply to Peter Kellner

TWO WEEKS AGO Peter Kellner devoted his entire column to the proposition that the method I have developed for forecasting elections does not work. To summarise his argument: (i) my method (the Proportional Loss Hypothesis — PLH) gives unduly good forecasts for the Alliance; (ii) it is not consistent with some of the results of the 1983 general election; (iii) you can get better results using the old-fashioned swing. To summarise my argument: Peter Kellner has got his sums wrong.

Let us look at the track record of the PLH:

G.E. 1979	5.4.79	Western Daily Press	Con 334, Lab 274, Lib 10
	3.5.79	BBC radio, TV	Con 339, Lab 270, Lib 10
	4.5.79	Actual result	Con 339, Lab 268, Lib 11
G.E. 1983	17.5.83	Daily Telegraph etc.	Con 395, Lab 225, All 11
	9.6.83	BBC radio	Con 397, Lab 216, All 16
	10.6.83	Actual result	Con 397, Lab 209, All 23
Euro 1984	21.2.84	Bristol Evening Post	Con 46, Lab 32, All 0
	24.5.84	Bristol Evening Post	Con 42, Lab 36, All 0
	16.6.84	Actual result	Con 45, Lab 32, All 0

Not bad, applying the test of how well the PLH 'mimics real-life behaviour'. The record hardly bears out Kellner's accusation that 'The Alliance does well out of Reece's sums'. Not once has the model over-predicted the Alliance performance, so there is no reason for assuming that the figures produced by the same model using recent opinion polls have boosted the Alliance score.

Why has the PLH tended to under-predict the Alliance share of seats? The answer is that there has been a significant development in the elections since 1979: one-way tactical voting. In the 1983 election, Labour started with a ('first-preference') share of around 33 per cent, confirmed by the May local election results. The subsequent behaviour of the electorate can best be explained not by a uniform loss of 5 out of every 33 Labour voters to give the eventual figure of 28 per cent, but by the selective collapse of 'wasted' Labour votes.

In constituencies where Labour polled over 60 per cent Kellner found that the proportional loss was much less than that for the whole country and where Labour scored below 20 per cent it was much higher. A disproof of the PLH? The safe Labour seats Kellner considered are mostly in the North, in Scotland and in Wales, where Labour's loss was indeed less than 10 per cent, compared with 25 per cent overall. Similarly, the seats where Labour polled very badly were mostly in the rural South and South-West of England where Labour's regional performance was disastrous. Applying the Gallup regional figures (*The Times*, 7.6.83), the PLH gave the correct result in all but 12 seats. Of course the PLH would have given the wrong answers if we had ignored regional variation as Kellner does. In explaining how we used the PLH I wrote: 'One important modification made in 1983 was to allow for anticipated regional variation.'* I know it's a tedious business, reading and understanding things before you criticise them, but it does give that bit of extra credibility to your argument. This may explain the subtle difference between science and journalism.

In an attempt to show that the PLH gives seats to the Alliance that the swing would not, Kellner takes the example of Kingston-upon-Thames. If we follow his arithmetic carefully, we shall see where he goes wrong. In 1983 the figures were (eliminating the 1.3 per cent 'other' vote): Conservative 55 per cent, Alliance 33 per cent, Labour 12 per cent. Kellner has calculated the new result on the basis of a 'nine per-cent swing from Conservative to the Alliance'. But who is to say that the Labour Party will sit back and allow itself to be fixed at its 1983 level of 12 per cent? The swing fails because in order to use it Kellner has had to ignore the fact that the Tories have somehow to forfeit another 4 per cent, possibly to Labour, to account for their 13 per cent drop overall — just enough to give Kingston to the Alliance.

Now if you consider in every constituency either a swing from the Tories to the Alliance of 9 per cent or a swing from Tories to Labour of 10 per cent, nowhere will the Tories suffer the overall loss of 13 per cent shown in the Marplan poll. Not surprisingly, the Tories do better under Kellner's scheme than under mine — he has awarded them a minimum bonus of 3 per cent in every constituency. If you ignore either the Alliance or Labour, the votes they would have gained from the Tories are simply left with the Tories! In fact, common sense says that the Alliance would probably pick up quite a few of the 4 per cent that might otherwise have gone to Labour, making it even more likely that they would take Kingston.

It is very important to ignore the right party if you use the swing method: which one would Kellner have ignored at Brecon? Whichever party he chose — presumably the Alliance, which was just third in 1983 — would have no chance of taking the seat.

Some of Kellner's technical points require clarification. For example, the old swing method was born in an age not of 'two-dimensional' but of one-dimensional politics: this is clear if you remember that the swingometer traced out points on a line. A minor point, perhaps, to a non-numerate person, but possibly indicative of the level of Kellner's understanding. Likewise, the 1955 and 1959 figures were used for testing purposes for the excellent reason that these genuinely two-party elections were ideal for the swing method; the PLH, it turns out, would have forecast them even better. Also, even if there were good reasons (which there are not) for supposing that Kingston, say, should be held by the Tories, this would amount to no more than the well-known 'My grandfather smoked 40 a day till he was 90, so I don't believe these cancer statistics'. Errors in one direction in one part of the country will show up as errors in the opposite direction somewhere else. That is why the PLH, which is a statistical theory, has worked so well.

Essentially, it seems, Kellner was happy to join me in publishing the first description of the PLH because it correctly indicated that merely because the Alliance could take, say, 26 per cent of the votes, it would not come anywhere near to taking 26 per cent of the seats. I also correctly forecast that although the Alliance might take a large slice of Labour votes it was unlikely to take many Labour seats. What it would do, and did in 1983, was to hand a large number of Labour seats to the Tories. Suddenly, in 1985, the same model, which has been used to forecast correctly the outcome of every national and many local elections in Britain since 1979, forecasts that if the Alliance gets 32 per cent of the vote, they might get a sixth of the seats. And Peter Kellner decides that the theory must be wrong. Not surprisingly — to me at least — his arguments do not stand up to examination.

Gordon Reece

Dr Gordon Reece lectures in the Department of Engineering Mathematics in the University of Bristol. Peter Kellner will reply to Dr Reece in August.

* *Voter Representation*, published by CAER, 21 Ingleside Close, Beckenham, £1.50 post free.

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Weekend

Captain Marvel's Final Fix

Clifford Harper

With a rhetoric about evil enemies conspiring to destroy the American way, President Reagan's language seems to stem direct from a paranoid and primitive fundamentalism. His answer is to own and command the magical powers of hi-tech — an answer, says DAN SMITH, which finds an echo in many a small boy's heart

EVERY SATURDAY morning in America, children — especially boys — sit for hours watching television cartoons. There is a wild profusion of them on several channels, all far cruder visually than the old Warner Brothers, Disney or Hanna-Barbara favourites. The modern technique of partial animation virtually eliminates facial expression and makes all the movements wooden. Artistic skills which made even the ever-predictable outcomes of Wile E. Coyote's efforts to ambush the Road Runner vastly entertaining, have long since been abandoned. What has replaced them to keep the current generation hooked in wonderment?

The answer is not the plots, which are just as predictable as ever. When pure good is pitted against pure bad at eleven o'clock on a weekend morning, there can be only one outcome. Part of the answer may be that, although the level of violence does not seem greater (and may even be lower), the dire fates threatening today's heroes and heroines seem a good deal more frightening than they used to be.

But the larger part of the answer, I think, is their detailed content and setting. Alongside a wide and weird variety of magic and 'super powers' available to the protagonists, good and bad, many include an astonishing range of fantastic technology. Long-distance trucks turn into flying robots equipped with all manner of weaponry. Heroes sit before arrays of omniscient computers offering sympathetic advice in mellow tones. If they cannot fly under their own 'super' power, they go out to battle the evil ones in fabulous machines. Instructions may come from computers themselves, or from the disembodied voices of ever-absent commanders communicating from half a world away and further.

In these cartoons, the battle between good and evil comes down to a contest between the technology each side uses — or, in some more sophisticated variants, to the skill with which each uses it. The human (occasionally superhuman) factor is not always entirely absent, but technology is always, if not decisive, at least the indispensable foundation on which the final victory (until next week) is built.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY exercises a profound fascination, whether of attraction or repulsion, often both. It is part of the fascination which is exercised generally by power and mastery, but with a specific element of *ease*.

Recently my five-year-old son sat on my lap drawing a picture on the computer on which I am writing this article. We decided to move one bit of the picture to a different part of the screen. It is a simple operation. He looked up and said, 'when I'm a big man, I'll know how to go whoosh,' (he flicked his fingers over the keyboard) 'and it'll happen.' On a small scale, he was experiencing that fascination with the easy control that an advanced technology can give you.

The fascination is particularly intense in America, where technology and its artefacts measure personal success in terms of cars, home computers, electric orange squeezers and so on, and at different levels measure national prosperity and power. Saturday morning cartoons are but one example, albeit a strikingly pure one, of the recurrent American dream of the technological fix. It is a central component of US culture. Its appeal is not limited to men — but men and boys tend to be far more gripped by the details of technology than women, and it is perhaps with technology (arguably, even more than with sport) that men are at their most boyish.

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It is by no means unambiguous. The image of science and technology run amok, of the mad scientist, the evil genius so obsessed by the achievements and potential of science and technology that he forgets his own humanity and everybody else's (and is finally brought to grief precisely because he ignores the human factor) — these are powerful images in popular culture. But the nightmare does not obliterate the dream: if anything it intensifies it — used badly, technology has infinite powers of evil; used well, infinite virtue.

'The image of science and technology run amok, of the evil genius so obsessed with the potential of science and technology that he forgets everyone's humanity is a powerful image in popular culture.'

The general fascination with technology and its power dates from the onset of the industrial revolution in Britain. But in its current American form, it began with mass production, made possible by technological progress, the harnessing of science by the corporate world, and the 'scientific management' of workers.

Mass production required mass consumption. To create a market, the American advertising industry was greatly expanded after World War I and its techniques were revolutionised. Social problems were translated into personal difficulties which could be solved by a little bit of purchasing. In the adverts of the 1920s, 'modern living' was eulogised as a matter of easy transportation, central heating and household appliances. Advertisers sought an homogeneous mass market, which meant the cultural heterogeneity of the immigrant population had to be broken down. American culture was thus created out of the new age of mass production and consumption. The benefits of technology were central to it, along with the system which made them available — hard work, industrial discipline, free enterprise, the 'American way'.

A MAJOR CARRIER of this culture is the US military — a largely male world where connections between technology and power are particularly obvious, and where complex matters of politics and economics are usually translated into issues of the possession of technology. The state of play in rivalry with the USSR is regularly assessed in technological terms. Maintaining technological superiority has been a fundamental tenet of US security policy under successive administrations since the 1940s.

There are hints of such an approach in the competitive construction of Dreadnought battleships by Britain and Germany before World War I. Today, it is not a matter of hints: it is a central point of policy. In the war in Vietnam the systematic application of advanced technology could not solve the tactical, strategic and political problems of the US position there. That failure has not deterred further development of the technological intensity of the US military. Of all its high-tech wonders, President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative is the highest and most wondrous.

The technologies it requires are quite fantastic. Among other items in the current $26 billion, six-year research programme: a computer capable of per forming one trillion (= 1,000,000,000,000) operations per second, perhaps utilising a programme containing 10 million lines; a series of orbiting battle stations equipped with lasers capable of hitting a new target every one-tenth of a second; a satellite in geostationary orbit some 36,000 kms high, containing a telescope mirror about 20 times larger than the biggest ones now in use down here on Earth, which are themselves very fragile.

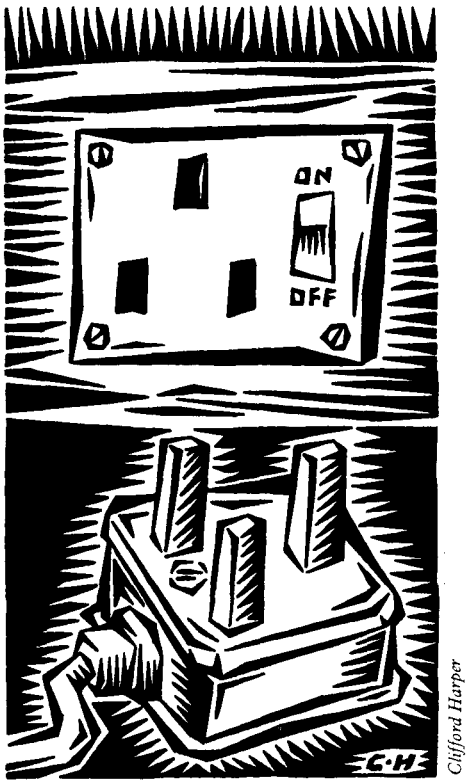
The unreliable performance of high technology and the availability of a host of counter-measures combine to make it hard to see how Star Wars could work. But like no other, our era has seen wild ideas come true, so it should be conceded that in time the USA might solve these problems and

'The human spirit doesn't need to do a thing. It can sit on its hands and wait while the scientists and the military — industrial complex give us the answer.'

equip itself with a space-based system, able to destroy at least a large proportion of incoming Soviet missiles. It could then credibly threaten to use nuclear weapons against the USSR, expecting if it implemented the threat to suffer far less damage than it could inflict, thus 'winning the war'.

The Unholy Grail would have been achieved. But what then? If the chalice was not swung crashingly down on the Kremlin, we can assume the USSR would in time get its Grail too, just as it has followed everywhere else the USA has led in the nuclear arms race. President Reagan refers to this prospect as Mutual Assured Survival, which sounds far more reassuring than the Mutual Assured Destruction of today it would replace. The nuclear weapons of both sides would be neutralised, world peace would be assured.

This is not simply a gross delusion, but also a wonderful example of the ironic destinations to which the search for the technological fix can take any argument. You will not find a nuclear strategist in the USA who wants the USA's nuclear



Clifford Harper

weapons to be neutralised. All strategic developments over the past 30 years have been aimed at making them usable, not paralysed. According to all the orthodox nuclear wisdom of the USA, the neutralisation of nuclear weapons would make a conventional war possible between the USA and the USSR. If nuclear weapons are neutralised, NATO's strategy collapses into little incoherent pieces.

DERIDING STAR WARS is easy as well as necessary. The idea is outrageous, offending against both commonsense *and* serious thought, as well as dangerous. But scorn for its substance should not blind us to the very great sophistication of its political handling by the Reagan administration and to its terrible, insidious tug on our hopes and thinking. It faces widespread opposition, yet it is an active military programme, shaping political issues and debates, and proving surprisingly tough to argue against.

In part, this is because it offers two equally attractive options — nuclear superiority if the Soviets cannot copy it, and Assured Survival if they can. But the basis of its resilient appeal is not so very far removed from those TV cartoons. Incredible technology provides the answer

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to terrible problems in a struggle between pure good and pure evil.

The television address in which President Reagan launched the programme was one of a series of major speeches on strategic issues in Spring 1983. The first, in early March, was when he referred to the USSR as the Evil Empire — 'the focus of evil in the modern world.' It was a staggeringly (childishly?) black-

and-white worldview, but seriously advanced by a man who twenty months later was re-elected President. Some wag at the White House dubbed it the 'Darth Vader' speech, which made it easy to call the television address later that month the 'Star Wars' speech (even though much of its content concerned Central America).

'I have become more and more deeply convinced,' he said, and few readers of this magazine are likely to disagree, 'that the human spirit must be capable of rising above dealing with other nations and human beings by threatening their existence.'

So how should the human spirit go about it?

'Let me share with you a vision of the future which offers hope,' the President said. 'It is that we embark on a program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat with measures that are defensive.' He went on, 'I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who give us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace: to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete.'

In short, the human spirit doesn't need to do a damn thing. It can sit on its hands and wait while the scientists and the military-industrial complex give us the answer.

The speech even catered for the ambiguity in the technological culture, the fears it can arouse, the dark side — the scientists who will give us the solution are the ones, in principle if not in point of detailed fact, who gave us the problem.

But what is most telling, powerful and tempting is the *vision* — a world (or, at least, an America, which is fairly much the same thing from some points of view) which is made safe against evil, thanks to the most supremely sophisticated technology.

The whole package strikes its cultural chords so skilfully, that the argument about Star Wars in the USA has begun to degenerate into a dispute about whether or not the technology will work. Each time its proponents can claim that one or another aspect of the required technology is available, or almost, they make more ground. As Felix Pirani pointed out in the *New Statesman* last week, the Administration is in the process of winning the first round of the argument, for how can you reasonably stop the research programme unless you know the technology cannot work? And how can you be sure of that unless we go ahead with $26 billion worth of research?

THE LURE OF the technological fix is particularly American — but not exclusively. Western European governments have reservations about Star Wars, because they do not welcome the collapse of NATO's strategy, but most still want to be involved in the US research programme — or to initiate something similar in Europe — for fear of falling technologically behind. The system of mutual deterrence they prefer is itself a technological fix. The problem of two world powers with incompatible social systems and conflicting political goals is consigned to an illusory solution based on sophisticated military technology. Neither Star Wars nor conventional nuclear deterrence holds any assurance of permanently avoiding nuclear war between the superpowers. Neither can bring peace in the numerous wars which wrack our planet. Neither provides a way towards a just and peaceable world.

The tug of the technological fix goes further. In the debate about non-nuclear defence, a similar tendency can be seen in some positions. It is evident not only in proposals for conventional defences based on high technology and the 'automated battlefield' (in this country most notably associated with the Just Defence group), but also in other less technologically sophisticated proposals, and even in some of the ways in which the case for non-violent defence has been argued. The flaw of these positions, in common with mutual deterrence and Star Wars, is to treat the problem of superpower confrontation and the Cold War as if it could be solved by changes in the organisation of military force.

Obviously some technologies are more likely to promote tension, hostility and danger than others. However made, the threat of annihilation is unlikely to engender peaceful, trusting international relations. Changes in military technology will have a place in international politics on the road to disarmament.

The point that such changes, while necessary, are not the whole answer is banal and simple — but it constantly needs to be reasserted against the temptations of the technological fix. When we argue it, we are arguing against a major component of modern culture and ideology, one which transcends divisions of politics, class and nation, and extends some of its tendrils across the gender division.

We all hope that there could be a simple way to solve the terrible problems of today. It is only human. In societies where, for good and ill, advanced technology is so important, it is hardly surprising if our hopes alight particularly on technology as the source of all solutions, the magic key, the answer.

Nobody has articulated that hope more

'. . . a computer capable of performing 1,000,000,000,000 operations per second, a programme containing 10,000,000 lines, orbiting battle stations with lasers capable of hitting a new target every one tenth of a second, a satellite with a telescope mirror 20 times larger than the largest one on earth . . .'

succinctly, skilfully or dangerously than the American President. If we argue against Star Wars as a misleading technological fix — as, to do him credit, Sir Geoffrey Howe has with his telling image of a space-age Maginot Line — we are bound in logic and honesty to extend that argument to any approach which reduced international politics to a matter of technological artefacts. Otherwise, the delusions of the technological fix will haunt us to our destruction.

Meanwhile, back to the children. The Director of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organisation is US Air Force General James Abrahamson. *The Times* of London reports that he talks about his research programme 'with all the enthusiasm of a schoolboy explaining the merits of a favourite racing car'.

What was that song about taking the toys from the boys? □

Dan Smith is a Fellow of the Transnational Institute of Amsterdam, and Vice-Chairperson of CND.

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Safe Houses
LYNNE ALEXANDER *Michael Joseph* £8.95

THERE IS NO SUCH THING as a perfect peace, any more than there is any such a thing as a perfect society. Amos Oz's latest novel is set on a kibbutz in the mid-Sixties, not so much in a time of peace as that of a lull in hostilities. Yonatan Lifshitz is fed up with the dreary daily round, his frigid wife Rimona, his embittered mother and his putative father who was one of the founders of modern Israel. Just as he decides to leave the collective in search of his individual destiny, a stranger arrives at the kibbutz. Azariah Gitlin is a sort of holy fool, well-versed in the philosophy of Spinoza but, rootless and lonely as he is, inept in social or personal relationships. To the discomfort and lazy incredulity of all, Azariah prophesies war.

Eventually and inevitably war comes, but not before the murder in the hearts of human beings has been revealed. Everyone, except perhaps Azariah, has murdered someone or something, even in themselves. At the centre of the novel lies the dead relationship between Yonatan and Rimona, haunted as they both are by the memory of their stillborn child and an earlier abortion. At first the kibbutz (Israel itself?) seems like Hamlet's Denmark, a prison and an unweeded garden where all grows awry. But when Yonatan leaves and Azariah takes his place, not only in the tractor shed but in the marital bed, a slow process of growth, healing and acceptance begins. If there is murder in the human heart, there is also creativity and hope for the future.

Amos Oz's voice has the prophetic ring of one crying in the wilderness, the cry being at once a lament and a sort of muted hymn. Ostensibly his main concern is with the self-determination of Israel and hence the meaning of Jewishness. But in its perfectly-controlled blend of lyricism, passion and stoicism, **A Perfect Peace** transcends place and nationality. Amos Oz is a novelist of stature and — even rarer in the scheme of things — wisdom.

Meanwhile in Cairo the struggle for self-determination continues, especially for women. Nawal El-Sadaawi is well known for her autobiographical *The Hidden Face of Eve*, in which one of the many memorable passages is her account of her own childhood 'circumcision'. Bahia Shaheen, the medical student heroine of **Two Women in One**, has escaped such mutilation. She is in theory capable of leading the freer life of a Western woman, though still the well-behaved daughter of conventional middle-class parents. At 18 she falls in love with a politically radical fellow-student and her whole life changes. In becoming politically and sexually aware, she must make choices, break rules, lose her old identity. But, again and again, there is a price to pay. The story represents the lives of thousands of women but here it is also fiercely individual, thanks to Nawal El-Sadaawi's spikily stylised treatment. Bahia's confusions are laid bare in a series of reiterated phrases and incidents, but the writing is always spare and remains bitingly to the point.

On the home front the struggle is less intense, shading into the literary or the farcical. In **The Landscape Comes and Goes** Jessica Gore, a middle-aged novelist, is suffering from writer's block and jealousy. The winter is harsh, the house must be sold unless the best-seller is written, and the husband is having an affair with a glamorous alcoholic neighbour. Or is he? Well, no, he isn't, and this is the problem with the novel: nothing really happens, either outwardly or inwardly. Neither the block nor the jealousy comes across as painful or destructive in any way but both remain under ladylike restraint. Elizabeth Gunn's writing is erudite, allusive and exceedingly stylish — so good, in fact, that the reader is led to expect more from her than this curiously subdued non-story.

Gwynneth Branfoot is by contrast all attack and high spirits. The subject-matter of **Men Have All the Fun** is marriage as farce, the men struggling for supremacy and the women for equality in a constant series of subterfuges and open battles. Meg, Jo, Bev and Amy are all to some extent good wives fed up with being nothing more than little women. Their husbands are uniformly unspeakable, their children no more than so many nuisances. What then remains? 'Joke jobs' such as selling shellfish in pubs or sketching portraits of the customers' pets. It doesn't seem like very much. And, indeed, it isn't, because the women are all fictional characters in a play written by Jo, a play which has no hope of being performed. This last is hardly surprising because the characters and their problems are, despite the narrator's protests to the contrary, all 20 years out of date. But Jo perseveres with a novel instead. Self-determination through art? It is a surprisingly lofty conclusion to what is essentially a novel of knockabout domestic humour.

Self-determination through fantasy is more the line of the women in **Safe Houses**. Gerda, an agoraphobic prostitute living in a Brooklyn tenement, tells her anorexic daughter Rella that her father was Raoul Wallenberg, although he might well have been Adolf Eichmann. The notion that Wallenberg is still alive becomes Rella's *raison d'être*. Thanks to the avuncular attentions of Jack, a neighbour who was once pressed into service as Eichmann's pastry-cook, she begins to eat and to thrive. But not for long. Cold-hearted Gerda and well-meaning Jack share the narration of this confidently complex first novel in which truth is always elusive and identity itself a precariously fabricated structure. □

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FICTION 2: STORIES

Diamonds and glass

Anne Smith

The Lipstick Circus
BRIAN McCABE *Mainstream* £7.95 & £4.95
Women's Part: An anthology of short fiction by and about Irishwomen
ed. JANET MADDEN-SIMPSON *Arlen House* £11.95 & £5.95
The Whitbread Stories
ed. CHRISTOPHER SINCLAIR-STEVENSON *Hamish Hamilton* £4.95
Twenty Stories: A South East Arts Collection
ed. FRANCIS KING *Secker* £7.95
Seven Deadly Sins
Severn House £7.95
Lesbian Tryptich
JOVETTE MARCHESSAULT, trans. YVONNE M. KLEIN *The Women's Press of Canada* £4.95

JUST AS A TERRIFYING number of amateur writers regard poetry as a sort of inspirational burst on the banjo, to be got down on paper between brewing the tea and laying out the biscuits, others seem to regard short-story writing as a creative by-blow, a way of using up material that is inadequate for a full-length novel. Very few of the short stories here appear to have been written by *real* short-story writers, writers that is for whom the genre is, in Walter Allen's word, a necessity.

None of the others comes anywhere near the direct, economic and masterly brilliance of Brian McCabe, whose work must convince the unbeliever that the short story is an art form as distinct as poetry and as capable of expressing the most poignant, least expressible emotional perceptions. **The Lipstick Circus** is a stunning collection of perfectly constructed stories in which McCabe uses language in such a way as to make it impossible for the reader to skip a phrase.

Take the blind man whose head looked as if 'it were leaking darkness'. Take the little boy tormented with the practical limitations of fashioning a costume for a cub-scouts' fancy-dress party: his father is unsympathetically mocking and, after one or two woundingly facetious suggestions, concludes, '"Ach well. . .ye'll just have tae go as yersel. One of the lumpen proletariat."' Or the description of an unhappy marriage as heard from the flat above: 'His voice like a moaning trombone, saying opprobrium opprobrium. Hers a violin practice fit to shatter decanters, accusing accusing. Needless to say the alsatian provides the rhythm section. Then the brat trying to get a scream in edgeways. . .' The lonely young man who listens to this composes a letter in his head to an agony-aunt: 'Dear Mrs Earhole, my problem is I don't know where to begin don't think I can go on and dread to think where it will all end, yours desperate.'

Take the amateur Edinburgh poet in a chance encounter with a young American tourist in a shelter on a wet day. He poses:

> 'Autumn,' he said, motioning loosely with a hand to the rain, the earth and the sky, 'always makes me feel a bit ah. . .melancholic.'
> 'Check,' said Louise. . .

McCabe is funny and moving simultaneously — which is to say, his stories are alive. And he has an excellent range, from the two gay waiters getting on in years to the schoolboy who invents a Martian friend to stand between him and the terrible fact of his mother's insanity, to the amateur artist who falls in love with a distantly-viewed sunbather. There's genius in *The Lipstick Circus*.

Beside this, all the other collections under review pale into ordinariness and even, too often, boring banality. Janet Madden-Simpson in **Women's Part** makes embarrassingly extravagant claims for her mostly deservedly forgotten Irishwomen, scraping the feminist barrel. **The Whitbread Stories**, by unpublished writers between the ages of 16 and 25, has all the faults you might expect — excessive morbidity, adolescent squalor for its own sake, remarks on 'the insane cruelty of existence': that sort of thing — but two good stories. Vanessa F. Brunning's 'The Face of the Horned Magdalene' is a delightfully potty mixture of elements of Trevor, Benson and Spark, and Mark Illis's 'Loomis' succeeds in catching the vulnerability of youth without veering off into self-pity, as so many others do.

In the South East Arts' **Twenty Stories**, Fred Urquhart's sensitive evocation of a working-class schoolboy's first experience of erotic love for the dashing young horseman from the Big House is outstanding. **Seven Deadly Sins** is of a good professional standard, with writers like William Trevor, Rose Tremaine and Wendy Perriam contributing a tale on each of the sins, but overall it is too written-to-order: the craft rather than the art is on show here. **Lesbian Tryptich** is a pretentious, would-be complex and symbolic wallow in misunderstood childhood: 'through us courses the blood of our grandmothers, the hearts of our mothers' (oh they does, does they?). The Catholic Church comes into it a lot.

McCabe's your man. □

In at the killing

Phil Gunson

The American Connection: Vols I & II
MICHAEL McCLINTOCK *Zed Press* £19.95 & £7.95 *each volume*

'IN CONVERSATIONS with Guatemalan officials we emphasize the need for further improvements in human rights,' the State Department official said. The US government 'strongly deplored' the fact that the press spokesperson of Guatemala's only public human rights group had been found murdered, with his tongue cut out. It was Easter — 'a week of blood and terror' according to the Archbishop of Guatemala, Mons. Prospero Penados. And in the small print: no, the US administration would not be withdrawing its request to Congress for $10m in military aid to Guatemala.

After all, as the former Assistant Secretary of State 'Tony' Motley had pointed out some time before,

> we need to resume — in a limited and conditioned fashion — a relationship with the Guatemalan military [which] still faces a serious insurgent threat. US support for those Guatemalans who are attempting to restore democracy, improve human rights, meet human needs, and defeat externally supported Marxist guerrillas is important to help create a sounder basis for the civilian government that will take over.

In the month when Mr Motley said that (May 1984) there were 103 political murders and 80 disappearances. The military says these are mostly the work of guerrillas or common criminals; 'a brazen lie' according to a British Parliamentary Human Rights Group report, which says that 'the evidence points inexorably to the state security apparatus as being responsible for these crimes'.

It is the great achievement of Michael McClintock in his meticulously documented book to have scotched the myth that such crimes are an aberration committed by primitive and untrained security forces. In fact, 'counter terror' is an integral part of the counter-insurgency doctrine taught by US advisers.

McClintock has amassed a wealth of evidence for this assertion, much of it obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, but often it is the sudden insight of an on-the-spot observer which sticks in the mind. In January 1968 the head of the US Military Mission in Guatemala was murdered. A *Time* magazine correspondent wrote:

> It was [Col Webber's] idea and at his instigation that the technique of counter-terror had been implemented by the Guatemalan Army. . .There were those who doubted the wisdom of encouraging such measures in violence-prone Guatemala, but Webber was not among them. 'That's the way the country is,' he said. 'The Communists are using everything they have, including terror. And it must be met.'

In the 30 years since the US overthrew the democratically elected Arbenz government in Guatemala, a succession of military regimes has killed over 100,000 people. Some 38,000 have 'disappeared'. And those, like Assistant Secretary of State Motley, who hold out great hopes for the forthcoming experiment in 'controlled democracy' might care to recall that it was under civilian figurehead president Méndez Montenegro (1966-70) that some of the worst atrocities took place.

Not much has ever been said about Guatemala. And these days not much is said about El Salvador either. With Duarte seemingly in firm control, the world has turned its attention elsewhere, and the security forces can get on with the killing in (relative) peace: 48 political murders in one week last month.

The army is 'irreversibly' on the road to victory says Defence Minister Gen Vides Casanova. And so it should be, after absorbing

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$523m in official US military aid in five years, not to mention murdering at least one per cent of the population.

The CIA can certainly be proud of its work. According to 'a former high-ranking Salvadorean officer' (Col Roberto Eulalio Santibanez, one-time head of the intelligence agency ANSESAL) 'the company' has had Vides on its pay-roll, along with other senior officers. All have been involved in the selection of death-squad victims, their task made all the easier by the efficient intelligence systems devised and installed by the US.

As McClintock writes

> Declassified documentation indicates that [AID's] Public Safety [Program] intelligence... advisers worked closely with both the military and civilian components of the intelligence apparatus — a distinction largely academic in El Salvador... these advisers worked independently of the rest of the Public Safety Program personnel stationed in El Salvador, were responsible to 'another agency'... and worked from the 'CAS' (CIA) office in San Salvador. Whatever their parent agency, they appear to have master-minded the building of today's intelligence apparatus practically from scratch.

Just as well those nice people down at the State Department are helping restore democracy. *Viva la democracia.* □

Struggles of a different kind

Barney Bardsley

Theatres of the Left 1880-1935: Workers' Theatre Movements in Britain and America
RAPHAEL SAMUEL, EWAN MACCOLL and STUART COSGROVE *Routledge* £8.95

'THE MODERN working class is not waiting for well-to-do people, however well-intentioned, to uplift them. We are going to uplift ourselves... We are going to force the doors open, we are going to take our place at the feast of beauty...' (Herbert Morrison, Labour Cooperative Movement theatre, 1920s). Optimism and energy like this were the catalysts of the phenomenal rise in left-wing theatre at the turn of the century, a movement documented in specialist detail by *Theatres of the Left*, a collection of essays, fragments of plays and personal, passionate memories.

In an age of compulsive but condescending soap opera for the masses it is useful to remember the historical richness of working-class culture. Raphael Samuel does so concisely and evocatively in his opening chapter, 'Theatre and socialism in Britain 1880-1935'.

Up to the First World War, mainstream theatre was dominated by dreary and exclusive naturalist drama. While the minks paraded past West End box offices, poor people enjoyed the lyrical speeches and music of the street, together with a radical politics which often went with them.

But after World War One, theatre of the Left grew as an independent force all its own. The Fabians started Britain's repertory movement; the Independent Labour Party fostered the Clarion Players — champions of George Bernard Shaw; and Labour's Cooperative Movement theatre opened an already potent and lyrical socialist vein, with the German pacifist and revolutionary playwright Ernst Toller becoming 'a kind of cultural hero of the British Left'. Forget all that crap about working-class illiteracy, too. Shakespeare was read, loved and — although criticised — well remembered.

But it was Britain's Communist Party — always alive to cultural expression in all its forms, and particularly so in the wake of Russia's 1917 Revolution — which started the most dynamic form of art propaganda, with its 1926 Workers' Theatre Movement. This was an appropriate year in which to launch street theatre shock troops all over the country, and out they went, raising money for strikers and offering a pure kind of agitprop in which German and Russian writers Kaiser and Meyerhold were inspirational, and where 'all art was propaganda, and the theatre itself a splendid weapon of struggle'.

Unlike the Labour Party's theatre which drew on drama past and present, WTM was concerned with bold symbolism, stripped of historical legacy. It was a naked shout for freedom. And there were echoes of this in other contemporary revolutionary groups, such as the wonderfully titled Plebs League, a Marxist movement in which Ness Edwards was active. These agitational outfits showed rude disrespect for all pre-revolutionary culture, as Edwards recalls when he quotes from one Huntley Carter's impish satire on the great Russian forefathers, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Chekhov:

> FIRST CHARACTER AT TABLE (drearily): I'm tired of waiting for breakfast (Takes pistol and shoots himself).
> SERVANT (enters hurriedly): The canary has committed suicide in the soup (takes poison and dies)...

The ultimate in proletarian revenge!

By 1936 this iconoclastic movement was already dying out, an incidental casualty, as Raphael Samuel sees it, of the fight against Fascism, when all Left groups were united under the Popular Front and art — inevitably — took a back seat to the real life tragedy of war.

Although this is a History Workshop book, I would have welcomed at least a passing reference here to the present day. There are obvious parallels for contemporary political theatre: the debate about agitprop versus a more conventional naturalism or the wildness of expressionism; how to use historical drama to inform and enrich the present, without being simply nostalgic; and — most necessary of all for today — how to lift a suffering theatre off its knees and back into the hearts and minds of a disenchanted public. When the progressive theatre of the Twenties stopped, it was muzzled by all-out war. These days it is a more subtle Fascism which lurks under the cuts in subsidy and which puts blinkers on television-addicted minds. What lessons can we learn from the pre-television theatre era? By simply cataloguing documents and events, Samuel *et al* have disappointingly kept the past as just a period in history, rather than opening it to living debate.

But within its own framework *Theatres of the Left* can certainly excite a committed reader. The sense of international communication is heady — Workers Theatre delegations coming to Britain from as far away as Japan, and continued inspiration throughout the Twenties from Soviet Russia — Eisenstein, Meyerhold, Stanislavski; and Germany — Hauptmann and Toller and the Expressionists. Struggles of a different kind are recorded by Stuart Cosgrove in his look at American political theatre, which was shot through with the fight against racism and the difficulties of establishing a multi-cultural movement. Back home there was also a strong Yiddish influence on theatre, fully catalogued here.

But highlight of the whole book for me is Ewan MacColl's blood and guts account of a life-long personal commitment to radical music and theatre. He celebrates his collaboration with Joan Littlewood, the founding of the Salford Red Megaphones — agitational theatre good and proper — and his burning desire to make a 'theatre of action' for 'people who wanted to tear it all down and make something better'. It is the outpourings of his Northern soul to which I shall return in this book. It is he who reminds me we have a theatre history to be proud of — and one from which to learn. □

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of the
Left
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RAPHAEL SAMUEL, EWAN MACCOLL and STUART COSGROVE
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From her ivory tower

Nicholas Murray

Herself Defined: The Poet HD and Her World
BARBARA GUEST *Collins* £15

ENGAGED TO EZRA POUND, sweet-talked by William Carlos Williams, married (briefly) to Richard Aldington, admired by D.H. Lawrence, psychoanalysed by Freud, HD lived constantly in the presence of some of the key figures of Anglo-American literary modernism. These men, whom she called her 'initiators', acted as a necessary goad to her creativity but did not seem to meet the complex (bisexual) demands of her emotional life. 'She lives on the heights,' said Aldington. 'She is like a person on a tightrope,' observed Lawrence. 'I can't write unless I'm an outcast,' was the poet's own judgment.

Her long life — she died in 1961 in Switzerland at the age of 75 — was an intense, unceasing search for herself. 'The definition of self, the penetration into self was HD's pre-occupation and obsession,' argues Barbara Guest in this commodious life which assembles a rich hoard of biographical material yet leaves the personality of this strange poet as elusive as ever.

Her most enduring relationship was with the writer Bryher, daughter of the fabulously wealthy shipping magnate Sir John Ellerman, who lodged in a Bauhaus eyrie — Kenwin — high above Lake Geneva. They had a baffling domestic arrangement which involved two successive husbands for Bryher: Robert McAlmon, writer and protegé of William Carlos Williams, and the avant-garde film-maker Kenneth Macpherson. It was punctuated for HD by sporadic escapes to European hotels and Swiss sanatoria, yet she was dependent on Bryher who managed her life and in return derived pleasure from HD's presence and her art so that, as Barbara Guest puts it, 'these two original, temperamental, self-indulgent, egotistical and talented women' achieved a sort of life together.

Consorting with HD's interest in psychoanalysis (in Vienna she would visit Freud every afternoon at five o'clock, stopping off sometimes on her way home to buy pictures of naked actresses for Bryher's pornographic collection) was an equally passionate interest in astrology, table-tipping, tarot and Egyptian mysticism. Harriet Monroe called her 'a pagan mystic' but some readers will recall the exasperated comment of Ezra Pound to the young Hilda Doolittle: 'Oh, don't talk such rot.'

Surprisingly perhaps for a book by one American poet about another Barbara Guest offers relatively little original literary criticism but the quoted comments of HD's contemporaries are astute. Amy Lowell, the statuesque and wealthy publicist of Imagism in America (no one in the HD circle was ever on short commons) wrote in her *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry*: 'This is a narrow art, it has no scope, it neither digs deeply nor spreads widely.' Edmund Wilson thought 'she writes well but there is not much in her' and the *TLS*, reviewing *Hymen*, found it 'deadening and monotonous'.

HD, IN SPITE of the opportunities afforded by her acquaintance, showed little interest in the visual arts — not even the electrifying art of Gaudier-Brzeska — and still less in society. She did, however, develop an interest in film, appearing in one of Macpherson's cinematic experiments. Freud said she was never satisfied by her writing because she wanted to be an actress. Although feminists are showing increasing interest in HD — it is only in the last year, thanks to the unflagging literary enterprise of the Virago Press, that three of her best prose works have been made available here — she showed no interest in them, even though Bryher was a feminist and demonstrated an early and acute awareness of the rising Nazi threat. HD once lived in the same Bloomsbury square as Tawney but they would have had nothing to say to one another. Her only recorded observation on politics was to deplore the general strike. Hers was an art without context.

Towards the end of her life HD appeared to want to jettison the label of Imagist first attached to her by that restless impresario of literary movements, Ezra Pound, when he scribbled on a portfolio of poems she had shown him in the British Museum tea-room 'HD Imagiste'.

This much-recounted incident was a literary movement's first gesture of self-advertisement and HD owed much to the advocacy of her fellow-countryman. But she no doubt became aware that Imagism, like our contemporary Martianism, was a field that could become over-cultivated and wished to free herself from the constraints of that label.

Her readers today are more likely to be drawn to the prose works like the delicate, introspective, literary *roman à clef, Bid Me to Live*. 'All those self-absorbed emotionalists,' wrote Aldington in a letter to HD about the draft of this novel, and Lawrence, who figures centrally in it, was later to guy this precious and rather self-regarding milieu in *Aaron's Rod*. The autobiographical nature of HD's writing will make this copious and fascinating life indispensable to the growing number of her readers. One hopes meanwhile that Virago will not be too long in extending their list to the other prose works in the HD canon. □

Fiona Pitt-Kethley

Red fish

At thirteen I bought a tuppenny packet
containing two red fish with instructions
from an old shabby newsagent's in Cork,
where they sold copies of *The Red Letter*,
(romantic nurse and doctor stories
with Orphan Annie on the back), odd eggs,
bacon (priced by the rasher not the pound),
and ice-white Chilly Willy lollies.

The cellophane fish curled in my hot palms —
the pack declared me 'Passionate'. Next term,
I took them into school. We used to try
sex quizzes out of mags. (You either lied
or were humiliated by lowish scores.
The ones who'd brought them in, mysteriously,
would come out tops.) My two red fish labelled
my friends 'Indifferent', 'Cold' or even 'Dead'.

At that stage, most of us tried no *real* tests.
Made cruel by religion I'd indulge
in the longest kisses and little else,
stopping myself the only way I could —
turning to rigor mortis in boys' arms —
too gauche even to say the reason why,
cold as the fish in other people's hands.

Life's harder when your body's reflexes
become the points of proof, with men
who dutifully ask you if you've come —
(Why can't they tell?) — and then dispute your 'Yes'
because they think your chest's not flushed enough,
or pride themselves your nipples are erect,
forgetting that they'd left the heating off.

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Shorter reviews

Seeds of Injustice
NIALL O'BRIEN *The O'Brien Press* £3.95

> Violence has a source, and that source is injustice. Violence is the fruit of the tree of injustice and hatred is its evil flower. If we sow seeds of injustice, we reap violence. If we want to remove violence, we must first remove injustice.

With these words, Fr. Niall O'Brien opens his uplifting testimony to the courage of radical Christians and the practical application of liberation theology.

Based on his prison diary and set in the Philippines' island of Negros under the Marcos dictatorship during 1983-84, *Seeds of Injustice* is a harrowing but often inspiring account of the frame-up, imprisonment and trial of Irish-born Fr. O'Brien and his eight co-defendants who became internationally known as the Negros Nine.

Falsely charged with murdering a local Mayor and four of his colleagues, the real crime of the Negros Nine was to oppose the brutality and corruption of the Marcos regime and side with the poor against the multi-nationals and absentee landlords. Through their Christian communities, they helped establish peasant schools, trade unions, co-operatives, credit unions and a support group to aid political prisoners and publicise their plight.

Following their arrest, the Negros Nine were held in appalling prison conditions. At Kabankalan, all nine slept on the concrete floor of a cell ten feet square, while next door a 12-year-old boy convicted of a minor theft was incarcerated with six murderers. In Bacolod Provincial Gaol, their courtyard was traversed by open sewers leading to one tiny jet of drinking water for 200 prisoners.

Eventually, after enduring over a year of these deprivations and a farcical trial dominated by the prosecution's mischievous delays, the case against the Negros Nine was dismissed — a victory won partly by international diplomatic and ecclesiastical pressure and partly through local peasant protests, including a 60-mile-long march which ended in a 5,000-strong rally outside Bacolod Gaol.

One thing that is striking about Fr. C'Brien's book is its downbeat, almost detached style. For someone who has witnessed so much suffering, he writes with remarkably little emotion — let alone anger and bitterness — as he records the power of community solidarity and non-violent resistance.

President Marcos will not like *Seeds of Injustice*. I did.

Peter Tatchell

Morality and Objectivity: A Tribute to J.L. Mackie
ed. TED HONDERICH *Routledge* £14.95

The good deed may shine in a naughty world, but does it exist — and is the world itself truly naughty? The Oxford philosopher, John Mackie, was firmly of the Humean persuasion that we err in supposing anything to be good or bad in itself. Those who pay tribute to him in this collection of essays do so in a spirit of criticism, much intricate argument being devoted by them to defending the idea that moral judgments are, in some sense or another, objective. If some of the more substantial pieces (by John McDowell, Susan Hurley) make difficult reading, R.M. Hare provides, if not much else, a useful guide as to what labels do — or should — apply in this tricky area of ethical debate.

More rewarding in many ways are the essays less directly concerned with the issue of objectivity. Philippa Foot offers a mild defence of some of our ordinary intuitions against the driving logic of utilitarianism (no act so awful it should not be done to prevent more of the same...), while a similar sensitivity to the pros and cons of the utilitarian ethic guides Amartya Sen's argument that our concern should be with the equalisation of capacities as much as with the satisfaction of desires. Sen shares with David Wiggins the understanding that any moral theory must begin by allowing the need to eat to over-ride the right to property — and aptly draws upon his own studies of Indian famine to illustrate his points. Wiggins, on the other hand, takes up the concept of 'need' more directly, but never sees fit to question whether the market-cum-welfare mode of provisioning, with all its conflicts of interest, is itself a permanent necessity of human life.

It is left, in fact, to Steven Lukes to make explicit the connection between conflicts of interest and social relations, while at the same time pointing to a wider and more serious sense of morality than that confined to the protection of rights. Morality is no mere remedy against selfishness, but essential wherever there are communal attachments: even a society of angels could not dispense with it.

Kate Soper

Portraits and Dreams
WENDY EWALD *Writers & Readers* £12.95 & £6.95

It is difficult to be straight about this book of photographs. At first I thought it was dealing with another of those loathsome arts-in-community projects in which the professionals preen themselves on being so generous and sensitive in putting their creativity to work for others. There is a little of that here.

The photographs and much of the text come from children; the children live or lived (they are young adults now) in a mining community in South East Kentucky. What is revealed to us quickly are two aspects — the indigenous attractiveness of a working rural environment of small holdings and a few family animals for food, and the grossness of the adults and the ugliness of their homes. But this ugliness is muted because the children's photographs are not attempting analysis or documentary but friendly, natural observations — after all, for the most part they love their families and their animals in a fairly unreflective way.

What comes across more slowly and more importantly is the odd mixture of objectivity and fancy with which the children confront the world. It amounts to a kind of innocence inasmuch as all the text and pictures reflect a basic trust in the world, an assumption that the set-up is decent even though death, violence and disappointment have already intruded upon several of the children's lives.

Adults write in this book as well and I gradually warmed to Wendy Ewald, the photographer and teacher who taught the children over several years in local elementary schools.

She says she fell in love with some of the children but had, like every one else, to let them go. 'I realized I was trying to hold on to a period of their lives that they had let go of. Their eloquence with the camera was a passage of childhood.' I think that is the clue to Ewald's achievement — she was able to suppress any feelings of self-aggrandisement that might have led to too much interference in the children's views. And the sense of the children's straightforwardness survives the translation of their work into an art book.

Peter Dormer

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JAZZ

In the land of dreamy dreams

Charles Fox

THE SOUND is sullen but ripe, like a peach about to burst. And no saxophonist has squandered ideas quite so lavishly. Symphony Sid Torin announces the numbers ('Groovin' High', 'Ornithology', 'Slow Boat to China'), constantly reminding his radio audience that all this is happening at 'the Metropolitan Bopera House', the Royal Roost, on Broadway at Times Square. Listening to Charlie Parker in New York really is rather like reading *Ulysses* in Dublin. But the news bulletins are all about the hi-jacking in Beirut. And we are eating breakfast — Thomas's English muffins with grape jelly — to a background supplied by SKCR ('88.3 on your FM dial'). Morning after morning, *Bird Flight* is working its way through Parker's entire recorded output, airshots and all.

The Royal Roost, alas, is gone, along with Harlem's Savoy Ballroom and all the clubs on 52nd Street — the Onyx, the Famous Door, Kelly's Stables. A sign on the corner declares that this was 'Swing Street', but there are no blue plaques to show where particular bits of history were once made. European jazz buffs must bewilder the locals by taking snapshots of car parks and tall office blocks, a little like Francis Thompson recollecting at Lord's ('O my Lester and my Yardbird long ago!'). Native New Yorkers are not sentimental about the past. Nor are most of them aware of their true heritage. Even cultured professional people seemed surprised that we should be making a Radio 3 documentary about Jelly Roll Morton, who claimed to have been born 100 years ago this September.

But plenty of jazz gets played in presentday Manhattan. The best club is actually a restaurant, Sweet Basil (to rhyme with hazel) in Greenwich Village. On the stand was Ekaya, led by the South African-born pianist and composer Abdullah Ibrahim (when I first wrote about him in the *NS* 20 years ago he was known as Dollar Brand). The rest of the band are all black Americans, including Carlos Ward, an alto saxophonist who has duetted with Ibrahim for many years. And, just as he always does, whether working as pianist or bandleader, Ibrahim includes pieces by Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk.

Fat Tuesday's, on Third Avenue and 17th Street, is a tighter fit (I almost had to share a seat with the guitarist). The Scott Hamilton Quintet, Warren Vache and Maxine Sullivan were supposedly presenting a tribute to the Cotton Club. True, Maxine did sing 'Get Yourself A New Broom' and 'As Long As I Live', but otherwise everyone ignored the label. Much more damaging was the absence of Vache, a trumpeter with imagination and a sense of style. Hamilton is the jazz equivalent of a young fogey, choosing to believe that musical life got frozen sometime around 1944. The outstanding musician was the pianist, John Bunch, especially when accompanying Maxine Sullivan, her voice tiny yet pure, coddling a song rather than restructuring it. How odd that half-a-century ago a few of the stuffier critics thought her 'swinging' of 'Loch Lomond' and 'Annie Laurie' to be in bad taste.

Genuine bad taste still flourishes, of course. Just as the sinking of the 'Lusitania' and the attack on Pearl Harbour incited outbursts of patriotism in Tin Pan Alley, so the hi-jacking found at least two men to match the hour. Chance Jones and Roger Hallmark from Birmingham, Alabama, were reported to be first off the mark with 'The Chicken Shiites'. A typical extract: 'Let's see how brave they are/ when Ronnie hollers charge/that's when the Shiites hit the fan.' Snippets of 'Anchors Aweigh', 'America the Beautiful' and 'The Star Spangled Banner' bolster the climax. No copies were on sale in places we visited. But bad timing rather than bad taste was becoming a way of life. How otherwise can you explain our leaving New York for New Orleans on the day that saw the start of the Kool Jazz Festival, the successor to Newport. Nothing seemed more paradoxical than sitting 23 floors above Canal Street watching a Great Yarmouth hotel manager being interviewed on TV about the IRA, knowing all the while that jazz buffs at Carnegie Hall were about to hear *Young New Orleans,* an evening devoted to musical yuppies such as Wynton Marsalis, Terence Blanchard and others.

But the quest for Jelly Roll took priority. Although he had quit New Orleans for good well before World War I, Tulane University (just like Rutgers in Newark, New Jersey) houses recordings of interviews with one-time Red Hot Peppers like Omer Simeon and George Mitchell who have since died. Very much alive, however, is Danny Barker, once the guitarist with Cab Calloway and husband of the singer Blue Lu Barker (she is ailing yet still queenly). Barker has a book of reminiscences coming out this winter. He knew Jelly in New York but his real area of expertise is New Orleans. He drove us to see the remains of Storyville, the red-light district in which Morton was a teenage piano 'professor'. No plaques to be seen, of course. Nor is there one at the house on Frenchmen Street where Jelly grew up with his grandmother ('Why are you photographing that place?' asked a puzzled black woman across the road).

Just off Jackson Square, at Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carré, Vernel Bagneris and his company are presenting *Staggerlee,* a follow-up to the hugely successful *One Mo' Time,* which also did well in London. Instead of a vaudeville theatre in the 1920s, the centre of the action is a New Orleans bar during Mardi Gras. Allen Toussaint wrote most of the songs and among the performers are Ruth Brown, the blues singer, and Larry Marshall, whose cloning of Cab Calloway was admired by almost everyone who saw the film *The Cotton Club.* Not so famous but equally impressive was a young girl, Sharon Nabonne, especially singing Toussaint's 'Ruler of my Heart'. So far — and we caught what was only the fourth night — the performances seem stronger than the show, but tinkering with the plot and a couple of extra songs should put that right. But before setting out for Europe — or Broadway — the in-jokes will require pruning: your man on the spot sat perplexed while all about him black New Orleanians exploded with laughter.

No doubt talented young musicians were playing in clubs that needed seeking out. But the tourist traps, notably along Bourbon Street, had bands just like Kenny Ball's. At Preservation Hall, no doubt deliberately kept tatty, the first XI (including the splendid Humphrey brothers, Percy and Willie) were playing away — no doubt in Europe. Substitutes ranged from mediocre to woeful, apart from the pianist Jeanette Kimball, looking just like the strictest sort of governess, and Chester Zardis (85 last May) who chose to play his bass facing the wall.

Better music could be run into on the streets or just off them. Two brothers, one about 15, the other no more than seven or eight, both black, blew trumpet duets on the levee. In Jackson Park a US Navy band (women as well as men) performed charmingly correct versions of tunes by New Orleans composers: Gottschalk, Tony Jackson, Clarence Williams. And in a shady spot within the French Market the Razzberrie Ragtimers played 'Riverboat Shuffle' and 'Good Time Flat Blues', complete with burping tuba but no clarinet ('There isn't enough money for a six-piece group,' the leader explained). Their trumpeter, Clive Wilson, was superior to any we encountered in bands elsewhere in New Orleans. All the more intriguing, therefore, to discover that ten years ago he had emigrated to America from London. □

THEATRE

Stage blood

Benedict Nightingale

Red Noses
PETER BARNES *Barbican*
The Duchess of Malfi
WEBSTER *Lyttelton*

ONE CAN'T SEE *The Duchess of Malfi* in revival, or many another Jacobean play, without being burningly aware that over the past 350 years our drama has lost much in the way of size, savagery and gaudy spectacle. That's Peter Barnes's strongly held belief, and doubtless also the reason for his lonely mission, which is to restore to the theatre some of its old ebullience and attack. Hence his *Bewitched,* a garish entertainment about inquisition, auto-da-fé, massacre and other such Iberian diversions, and hence his more recent *Laughter,* which somehow managed to enlist both Ivan the Terrible and Eichmann's grey-suited apparatchiks in an argument about the purpose

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of humour.

And hence what, when it was penned in 1978, was called *Red Noses, Black Death:* not the most alluring of titles, but one which aptly summed up Barnes's style as well as his subject, his mix of grand guignol and big top as well as his fascination with things horrendous and hilarious in periods of ignorance.

Why hasn't **Red Noses,** as it's been rechristened, been performed before? Perhaps because 40-plus characters are dauntingly many, even for a company as large, versatile and adept at doubling and trebling at the RSC. Perhaps because others share the doubts I've more than once professed about Barnes himself. Has he a sense of horror to match Webster's, or a sense of humour as rich and scathing as that of his beloved Jonson? Is he as Jacobean as he superficially seems, or, indeed as provocatively modern as he would also like to be? Is his content as interesting as his style is arresting, his mind as sharp and his sensibility as fine as his imagination is ambitious? Or not?

On to the big Barbican stage, all jagged crosses and crimson haze, comes representative after representative of 14th-century Christian society in frightened disarray. The archbishop's reaction to seemingly unstoppable plague is to run away, the Pope's to cocoon himself in what, as designed by Farrah, looks like a huge condom with giant toes.

Others are less gingerly and feeble. The merchants, who don't see much future for themselves, lavish their energies and fortunes on the prostitutes, who do. A band of cowled flagellants, led by a grinning fanatic who has borrowed his greenish hue as well as his crown of thorns from some Duccio Christ, roams the countryside and the cities, ostentatiously atoning for the sins of both. A group calling itself the Ravens, ex-galley slaves turned wandering morticians, preaches violent revolution and does what it can to bring it into being, mainly by smearing bits of infected corpse on the doors of the rich. And one Father Flote, in Antony Sher's beguiling performance a blend of Holy Fool, Simple Simon and Walt Disney's Happy, assembles a sort of mediaeval ENSA troupe with which to amuse the stricken masses. These oddly assorted mummers are Barnes's 'red noses', the motley evidence in another debate about power, laughter and (more precisely) the power of laughter.

When they're jollying people along, distracting them from the miseries of the plague and the Church's failure to cure it, they're officially tolerated and even encouraged. When they become less anodyne and actually start performing mildly subversive nativity plays, they're promptly destroyed. The authorities of their day, Barnes would suggest, are not so very different from those of our own. Ours too prefer 'meringues' to 'meat', in art, in politics. They too rapidly turn ruthless at socially volatile times. Occasionally something happens to create the possibility of change — a Black Death, a war, whatever — but the result is usually more and worse oppression. Disasters come, disasters go, and then 'a greater darkness falls, for we return to normal'.

These gloomy musings are mostly unexceptionable, but also unexceptional. After all, what has Barnes added to the more intellectually sophisticated and no less passionate study of the politics of humour that Trevor Griffiths made in his *Comedians*? The answer is, nothing very essential. A good deal of verbal play, and some rather forced puns: Puck's 'Lord, what fools these mortals be' appears, strenuously recycled into 'ah, what food these morsels be'. An occasional weakness for whimsy: Barnes becomes embarrassingly enamoured of a dumb jester named Bells, at whose sweetly-sad death a single balloon is released, to carry his spirit up to the flies. Much droll swagger and technicolour show: Flote's trip to see the Pope in Avignon kept reminding me of Dorothy's quest for the Wizard of Oz, though I don't think she met any swamp monsters, still less a bearded transvestite cooing 'hello, sailor'. And a certain moral sententiousness, examples of which I cannot bring myself to quote. If all these elements, genially flung together in Terry Hands's directional mixer, add up to a Jacobean tragi-comedy, then that's what *Red Noses* anachronistically is. My own feeling, though, is that what Barnes has pumped into the veins of our theatre is not good 17th-century gore, but a red-coloured amalgam of patent medicine, stage make-up and cherryade.

One of the qualities Webster has, and Barnes somehow hasn't, is dread of death, the ability (as T.S. Eliot put it) to 'see the skull beneath the skin'. This is much, and often very effectively, signalled by Philip Prowse's revival of **The Duchess of Malfi**. We begin with one of several funeral parades, the cast in black; the setting is a grey, relic-filled cathedral that gradually transforms itself into a grey, empty prison; and Death himself is omnipresent, watching and prowling and saying nothing. The danger is of sepulchral atmosphere distracting us from character; but this doesn't happen. Eleanor Bron is a bit lightweight as the doomed duchess, but Jonathan Hyde brings a wincing menace, a psychotic preciosity to the part of her murderous brother, and Ian McKellen, lately a tall, tapering and melodic Coriolanus, has somehow managed to lop and chop himself into a stocky, grizzled Bosola. Blunt and bleak, wishful and morose, disenchanted and oddly feral, he's plausible as both 17th-century malcontent and 20th-century assassin. Seeing him, one realises that the best place to find the Jacobean imagination brought to contemporary life is — well, a well-performed Jacobean play. □

ART

Holey ghosts

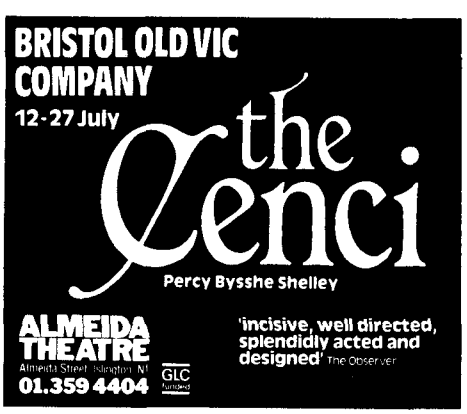
John Spurling

David Smith
Anthony d'Offay, Dering Street, London W1
Bruce McLean
Tate
Christopher Le Brun
Nigel Greenwood, 4 New Burlington Street, London W1

DAVID SMITH, usually docketed as the only sculptor of the American Abstract Expressionist generation, was also a painter. His sculptures themselves were conceived almost two-dimensionally: he would paint white rectangles on the floor of his studio at Bolton Landing and lay out the elements of his assemblages against them, so that he could shift pieces about and achieve the balance he wanted before welding them into place and standing them upright.

There is only one sculpture in the exhibition at d'Offay's and it is a thoroughly equivocal object, something like an enormous circular mirror-frame on a stand. Made of thin strips of steel, painted in many colours, virtually flat, it stands in space and frames space. In an oblique way — perhaps it is the white-based freshness of the colours and the improvisatory, almost home-made appearance of the parts which yet form a highly composed whole — it is reminiscent of Alexander Calder, whose work also defies the usual boundaries between painting and sculpture.

Much as he assembled his sculptures against white rectangles on the floor, Smith made paintings by placing odds and ends from his studio on paper or canvas, spraying the whole with enamel paint and then removing the odds and ends. The results seem at first rather cold and impersonal — certainly the reverse of expressionistic — and have not up to now been much considered: they have only been shown in quantity once before, in 1959. But this first cool impression — presumably a response to their quality as negatives, the absence of brush-strokes and the removal of objects whose shapes are defined as holes in the colour — alters with familiarity. The white spaces turn into sources of pure light and the sprayed areas around and between them into gradations of shadow — blotched, speckled, glowing, misted, layered. This shift in one's sense of the original object — its removal as a three-dimensional thing becoming its return as a two-dimensional area of light — seems metaphorical as well as physical. It alludes to time and memory at the same time as it mimics the act of perception. The disembodied forms of a spanner, a fork, a circular object, a strip of something with a bumpy edge hover and float like ghosts, sometimes conglomerating into a single firm image, sometimes suggesting a firework display, a garden full of Japanese lanterns or even a galactic explosion. ▷



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Having got used to these strange negatives that turn into positives, it would be interesting to be able to test the effect of one of Smith's later sculptures: would it reverse its solidity and become a kind of hole in the landscape? The Tate owns *Cubi XIX*, but it's not really possible to travel from d'Offay's to the Tate while retaining one's immediate sense of the spray paintings and in any case *Cubi XIX* is displayed indoors, in the centre of the Tate's Rotunda, where it is at present somewhat upstaged by a temporary ceiling by Bruce McLean.

McLean, born in 1944, began as a performance artist and has graduated in middle age to performance painting, completing large works at breakneck speed in a single session. For most artists the results would be disastrous, but McLean is not only a highly gifted draughtsman, he also has an unerring instinct for composition, so that what might have been merely energetic graffiti often contain the power and depth of much slower creations. McLean's subject-matter is mainly himself — there are many rapid self-portraits among the other incidents of his canvases — and his ironic reactions to life and art.

He is rare among contemporary artists for his sense of humour and he is especially ribald at the expense of angst-ridden fellow-artists such as Penck, Baselitz and Bacon and solemn art historians such as inhabit the Tate. His huge tondo (33 feet across) for the Tate's ceiling is part tribute to, part send-up of the French modernists, with particular reference to Léger and Matisse, whose ecstatically dancing figures have suddenly all been thrown off balance and are falling about with very cross faces, while a big Léger-like head smoking a pipe contemplates them stolidly against patches of jolly French modernist colour. Even the title has exactly the right flavour of pretentiously progressive obscurity: *The Construction of the Grey Flag*.

Christopher Le Brun, one of Nigel Greenwood's most successful discoveries, has been chosen to inaugurate Greenwood's splendid new skylit gallery just off Regent Street. Le Brun's subject is ostensibly horses, but, emerging from mists and chasms, silhouetted against dramatic triangular horizons, casting giant shadows of themselves, they are clearly more symbolic than actual. Le Brun's full-blown, overt romanticism is oddly chill, as if he didn't really expect anyone to take it seriously, but wished they could. There is one large painting without a horse, which shows a young drummer with a red tunic and is apparently a projection into the future of the artist's son (now a year old), with a face which is partly a self-portrait. It is a disturbing and memorable piece, not for its power but its lack of power, is semi-academicism, its tentative nostalgia. The man-boy, father-son, seems to be drumming out the death of a kind of painting to which Le Brun for the moment can offer no alternative. □

FILMS

Dorothy in Wonderland

John Coleman

Heading for trouble: Dorothy (Fairuza Balk), Jack Pumpkinhead and loquacious hen.

Return to Oz (U)
Leicester Square Theatre
The Princess (18)
Gate, Notting Hill
The Last Dragon (15)
Dominion; Classics, Haymarket and Chelsea

JUDY GARLAND FANS should join another queue: the new Dorothy (appealing little Fairuza Balk) belts out no songs and, indeed, has Victorian affinities with Carroll's Alice — in her politeness, her capacity for cool amid marvels and perils and a certain habit of falling headlong through the air.

Return to Oz, directed for Disney Productions by Walter Murch, previously better known as an award-winning sound editor with Coppola, keeps one eye pretty faithfully on reproducing the background and adventures of L. Frank Baum's Kansas-raised girleen while swivelling the other to incorporate some extremely special, often splendid effects. It is to Murch's credit that the outcome keeps the potential for artistic strabismus reasonably under control. What may strike viewers of all ages is that this is a film which sets out rather gloomily, and gradually — though passing some grim and fairytale scary moments — cheers up no end, offering a peculiarly adult progression from sickness to health.

The plot picks up young Dorothy, six months after the tornado that swept the Kansas farm of Aunt Em and Uncle Henry, still insomniac-yearning for the land of Oz and carted off to a sinister Dr Worley (Nicol Williamson) and his malevolent head nurse (Jean Marsh) for electric treatment. A thunderstorm and a mysterious older girl intervene; she escapes down a torrential river in a chicken coop with her pet hen Billina (who starts a folksy conversation), to land up near a scattered Yellow Brick Road and find the Emerald City in ruins, its gardens studded with petrified statue-people, her chums the Tin Man and the Cowardly Lion included. Talking rocks pass news of her arrival to the Nome King (Williamson again), granitic destroyer and despot; a gang of Wheelers, sort of punk harlequin bikers, in thrall to wicked Princess Mombi (Marsh, translated) who changes her heads as others do wigs, hurtle in pursuit; and a motley crew of new friends — a metallic, wind-up, stumpy Colonel Blimp figure called Tik Tok, Jack Pumpkinhead (these echoing older pals), and a moose or Gump face who becomes the prow of a Flying Sofa machine — help Dorothy to a confrontation with the rocky monarch and the restoration of Oz to its former splendour and gaiety.

Bonces play a big part in all this. Jack asks, 'Would you please check my head for signs of spoiling?' and, the aerial vehicle disintegrated, the Gump grumbles: 'I should have quit when I was a head'. Mombi's collection of interchangeable nuts recalls a famous cry of a Queen's.

Echoes or borrowings abound, mostly assimilated, as the Cocteau-stuff of melting mirrors and disembodied arms. And, though eleven-year-old Ms Balk is a trouper, it is likely to be visual wonders that hang on in memory from this eclectic occasion: a dazzling hall out of a pop-Versailles, some Wheelers crumbling to sand. Above all, one leans back to admire the stop-animation work which has the Nome King bit by bit emerging from a rocky wall, imperceptibly growing into a semi-human, and creates slithery hands and arms sprouting from cavern clay to turn inwards and scrabble a tunnel opening, as well as a sudden coven of gargoyle monsters. Near the close, the realistically loquacious hen (who, nicely, opts to stay in Oz rather than return to dull old Kansas) lays an egg in a gargantuan throat, poisoning the giant. It would be sad if this strange but inventive movie dropped similarly into the

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public maw. Liking it well enough, I wonder about its fate.

Starting with the title, **The Princess**, a first feature from the Hungarian documentarist Pal Erdoss, is not short on ironies. This harsh tale, shot on location in black-and-white using available light and — one hazards — little-known or non-professional faces where possible, singles out the life and largely bad times of Jutka (one of a group of country girls who get jobs in a Budapest textile mill) as she attains her sixteenth birthday and relieves the boredom of factory and hostel existence by frequenting bars, making an embittered visit to the mother who abandoned her when she was two, losing her virginity to a lad who promises her a future in a circus act. Then her best friend Zsuzsa (Andrea Szendrei) has a baby and, in a double-edged sequence, persuades Jutka to pretend it is *her* kid when Zsuzsa is forced to pay a duty-call on her parents; poor Jutka has to put up with moralising from her chum's father. Meanwhile Jutka acquires a boyfriend whose comfortably-off folks warmly approve of her.

This interlude of happiness ends on a rape by two drunken Yugoslavs, the boyfriend's callousness, an abortion. The last irony sees Jutka adopting Zsuzsa's unwanted baby, only for this idyll to come an inevitable cropper. What alleviates the near-sadistic cumulative misery is principally the director's Loach-like use of young Erika Ozsda — who has the wayward expressiveness of early Harriet Andersson — as put-upon Jutka: her sulks, rages and rare smiles withstand probing close-ups.

Whither popular cinema? may be balefully exemplified by the supremely silly and opportunistic Motown-promoted **The Last Dragon**, a soul-food chopsuey with a coolie-hatted black kung-fu hero, a comely black disco queen, black, white and yellow villains and a loud load of rock video visuals. Into a concoction which tries to send up martial arts while exploiting them for thrills, director Michael (*Car Wash*) Schultz manages to inject a modicum of cross-ethnic humour. □

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

A Private Function Blissful and British double first as Michael Mowbray steers top-notch cast through puncturingly word-perfect Alan Bennett comedy set in 1947 Yorkshire. Nagged by social-climbing wife, meek chiropodist gets revenge on local unworthies by stealing black-market pig. (Maggie Smith, Michael Palin).

Birdy Eloquent images, inspired technique, skin-tight performances give brave lift-off to allegory-flecked adventures in blue-collar Philly of ornithological obsessive (Matthew Modine) and butch buddy (Nicolas Cage), later traumatised by Vietnam. Alan Parker's most sympathetic venture since *Bugsy*.

Witness Australian director Peter Weir in fine-tuned control of offbeat US thriller. Rugged but honest city policeman (Harrison Ford), grudgingly harboured from bent colleagues by time-warp Amish farmers, shares unconsummated love with Kelly McGillis's superb widow until the inevitable, estranging shoot-out.

Card-carrying

Justin Wintle

THE WOMAN explained that, if I wanted to earn a bottle of champagne, I would have to buy more than a tie.

'But the man said, if he saw anyone making a purchase then he'd give them a bottle of champagne.'

She smiled wearily. There was even a trace of real commiseration struggling to break through the seven layers of make-up she'd wrapped around her face sometime earlier in the day. Her Indian eyes told me there was a small part of her which knew exactly how I felt.

'So then, is it a deal? I'll go and choose a tie, and as soon as I see him near you I'll step up to your till and you'll serve me immediately. And you'll go on serving me until the bugger notices.'

'Yes,' she smiled, 'okay, it's a deal.'

I set off for the tie rack feeling that I'd made the only friend I was going to make among a couple of hundred incommunicative guests who had come to Cecil Gee's men's clothing emporium in Sloane Street hoping what I was hoping, that they were going to win the first prize of a weekend for two in Venice.

Over by the entrance there was a Pimm's umbrella, and everybody was being given a glassful courtesy of American Express. The do was a double, nay treble, promotion. As you came in you dropped your invitation into a box and you were also given a free sample of *must de Cartier* eau de toilette. Blue boxes for the guys, red boxes for the dolls. Enough in each to wet a butterfly behind its ears.

'They're lovely, aren't they?'

'What are?'

I turned my head to find the close-cropped head of a diaphanous young man perched like a parrot on my shoulder. His accent was unmistakeably South Yorkshire camp, and it appeared he was another assistant.

'Lovely, don't you think?'

'I'm not with you,' I said.

'The shirts. Gorgeous.'

Oh, the shirts.

I inspected a couple and looked at the price tags. The figures were like the sort of score Geoffrey Boycott still makes on a slow wicket.

'No,' I said, 'they're disgusting.'

'Oh well, suit yourself.'

Laddie wandered off in one direction, I in t'other. I reached the ties. The first one that struck my fancy was £17.50. The rest were anything up to twice that sum. The music, which I hadn't really noticed, switched off and the host-compère reminded everybody that tonight Cecil Gee was offering a ten per cent reduction on everything. Then he presented someone with a bottle of champagne, an American Express watch-calculator and a bantam-weight kiss.

Ten per cent off £17.50 meant I'd still have to fork out £15.75, and of course no absolute guarantee of a bottle for me.

I made my way back to Indian Eyes.

'Did you find one?'

'No,' I said. 'It would be cheaper to go direct to the off-licence. Coming?'

'I'd like to, but. . .'

'Duty forbids!'

The woman nodded and I left her alone.

The music came on again. *It's a rich man's world*. No kidding. But as I looked around me I realised they'd chosen the song not for its words, but because Abba was the band least

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likely to provoke a bad feeling among the assembled horde. Everybody looked extremely rich and reminding them of the fact was like water off a duck's back.

Upstairs I discovered that a half-lined blazer cost as much as England made against Australia at Headingley in their first innings. Like everything else I inspected it had been made in Italy. Hence, I deduced, the grand prize: the trip to Venice.

By now I was certain it wasn't going to be my lucky night. I asked a man who had two glasses of Pimm's in his hands whether he thought it was going to be his, and he replied that you never know.

'Have you bought anything?'

He shook his head.

'Not this time,' he said. 'Though I'm rather taken by the swimming briefs in the basement.'

Then he turned his back on me.

To my delight, next to the display of Milanese Bermuda trunks, I spotted a small pile of very ordinary looking socks that couldn't possibly be more than a fiver a pair. However, like the more expensive garments upstairs, they didn't have any price on them and when I tried to attract the attention of an assistant Abba cut off in mid-bar and the hidden speaker announced that the draw was about to be made. Everyone dropped their Pimm's and rushed to the ground floor, myself and the assistants included.

'I'll draw for the first prize first,' said the well-known actor whose face I didn't recognise, putting his hand in the cardboard box containing the invitations. 'Yes. And it's Mr Gee. Sorry, no, I've made a mistake. I should have said it's Mr Dietrich. Is Mr Dietrich still here? Or his wife? Come forward Marlene and I'll give you a kiss as well.'

Those near me tittered nervously. They were still hopeful for themselves and, indeed, when the man Dietrich was nowhere to be found, another name was pulled from the hat. This time it was a Mr Laing. 'Must be Ronnie,' I said, but might just as well have unrolled a Chinese scroll for all the response I got.

Mr Laing had also vanished, and the holiday for two was eventually awarded to a shrieking Miss Macdonald. As soon as the prize-giving was over there was a mad, universal rush for the exit and I gained a couple of insights into recent events in Brussels.

Not wishing to be trampled underfoot I lingered behind a moment and persuaded a friendly American Express person to exchange my blue *must de Cartier* for a red one, to give to my wife. Outside I found the guests lost in a quandary on the pavement, pumping air and trying to decide whether to eat French or eat Italian. I passed them by quickly and made my way toward Knightsbridge Underground, hoping that Harrods would be looking the other way when I made my dive for cover.

But it was not to be. At the top of Sloane Street I had first to outflank a party of schoolchildren, whitesocked with shiny satchels, and then I discovered a blind man waiting to cross over. We parted company a few paces past Scotch House, and there she was, the cardholders' Mecca, rose-red and half as old as time, staring straight at me and staring straight through me. □

TELEVISION

Andrew Rissik

Cross-fire

MY HEART WARMS instinctively to a man who, when slapped across the face by his headmaster, decides impulsively to return the compliment and lays the fellow out flat. In John Osborne's autobiographical **A Better Class Of Person** (ITV) this was the only moment when the smouldering resentment of an uncomfortable adolescence took the form of an openly violent and splendid anger. Elsewhere, Osborne was a moody, awkward and rather private child, loved by a tubercular father whose early death distressed him terribly and tolerated by a sour and implacable mother whose affection for her son seemed always grudgingly bestowed.

In the end, as we know, things turned out better than anyone expected. The moral belligerence and spiritual nostalgia of Osborne's writing led him to the heady success of *Look Back In Anger* at The Royal Court and, culturally speaking, to a virtually instantaneous canonisation as the finest and most fervent of Britain's post-War dramatists. In a brief postscript to this film, its bearded, middle-aged author read out a less-than-enthusiastic review — it praised the violence of his writing but bemoaned the dramatic inadequacy of his gesture — then screwed it up and chucked it into the sea. 'Bugger Bognor,' he said, sparkling with malice.

Theatre-goers know Osborne mostly for his rage. Although there have been plays — like *Luther* and *Inadmissable Evidence* — in which a daunting complexity of argument has been caught in writing of muscular eloquence and intensity, Osborne is often seen now as a snarling old reactionary, a man who feels about life as Vanya felt about the Professor. *Look Back In Anger* is a school set text, and its biliousness and sentimentality — qualities which too often run parallel in Osborne's work — render it dated and harmless, a play of considerable historical importance but of little enduring dramatic value. Its author and the world have always been at odds and, out of their uneasy conjunction, there has come a teeming, fractured rhetoric which has never truly found a satisfactory artistic form. Right from the beginning, Osborne's vitriol needed a sense of proportion, some magnanimity of spirit, and dramatists who have followed have taken what they needed from him and moved on.

But *A Better Class Of Person* seems to me to be one of the most complex, acute and moving things that he has written. With marvellous precision, it delineates those shifting emotional allegiances which are the condition of childhood, those secret, often random loyalties woken by impulses too deep for reason and whose influence continually overshadows the person we think we have become. Autobiography has been a respectable form of fiction for centuries — Wordsworth's *Prelude* and Joyce's *A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man* used the framwork of their author's lives to speculate upon the shaping power of early experience — and, when some of the critics compared Osborne's film unfavourably to John Mortimer's *A Voyage Round My Father*, I was tempted to reply that there is a crucial difference between the ability to make your life into a story and the capacity to explore the sequentiality of what has happened to you — the arbitrary way that one thing follows another — and to discern some psychological pattern in that.

The stories of Jimmy Porter and Archie Rice come believably out of the casual unkindness of a boyhood in which Osborne found life prosaic and untrustworthy. Photographed with a lingering incandescent beauty by Jim Howlett, the film contained two performances of outstanding quiet power: as Osborne's father, Alan Howard was a frail, warm and dignified man emotionally stonewalled by a wife who could give him no comfort; as Osborne's mother, Eileen Atkins was a stubborn and exhausted woman, drained of emotion but keeping her head high. In this grey, overcast, uneventful childhood, Osborne's deepest hopes were dashed and, in learning to make the best of it, he has become the wounded dramatist we know today. *A Better Class Of Person* was directed with great delicacy and warmth by Frank Cvitanovich.

This week's Peter Shaffer award for gaudy dialogue goes to Howard Barker, whose thunderous **Pity In History** (BBC-2) pitted a bristling capacity for debate against a complacent sentimentality of language. The matter of the thing held real promise: Cromwell's soldiers erupt into a church, intent on demolishing what they are taught is idolatory. Imperturbably, a stonemason continues carving an effigy for a rich land-owning widow, unworried by the impending ruination of his work and interested only in getting paid. While an army cook dies of a bullet wound — outfacing the messianic rhetoric of his comrades with the humiliating urgency of pain and death — Barker constructs a tough-minded dialectic on the perishability of art, its function as property and the action of property itself as an oppressive social force.

But people will make speeches. 'When all the world is tilted, we need people who can keep their feet. Who can say of all calamity, this is a setback, but I hold to my own truth. I will not waver. The storm of history, when it is past, clears up, stone on stone, brick on brick . . .' There can be no apprehension of mortality in writing so deliriously self-satisfied as this. And nothing for the audience to do except listen to the author's roaring arsenal of ideology and grand phrase. □

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Naseem Khan

Reach out

THERE'S been a vague, dark shape moving across the radar screens of Britain's black arts for well over a year. At too great a depth to be viewed distinctly and giving out only occasional bleeps, it surfaced recently for a brief sighting. Vast and august in concept, it is without doubt the most sizeable development to take place in the field.

Nearly two years have gone by since the GLC helped Camden Council buy the Roundhouse, that respected white elephant in Chalk Farm Road, promising to turn it into 'a centre where the black community's contribution to the arts will be seen'. Little has been seen publicly since then — backstage work has involved committees, legalities and budgets, rather than programming and policy — so small wonder that the Roundhouse's first seminar the other week, not in the building's shell but at Deptford's Albany Empire, drew over 200 people from all over the country. That they did not eventually get what they came for sprang from a mutual misunderstanding that, in itself, has something to say about the state of the field.

For while the audience was largely there to talk about the Roundhouse, the Roundhouse's Outreach section, which had organised the day's meeting, had laid on a programme that talked about something quite different: arts outreach work.

Not that the day lined up was insubstantial. It bulged with examples of different projects that fairly bristled with questions: largely self-funded projects that verged on social work by Coventry Rastafarians; local authority attempts to get Asian communities into museums; a messianic account of the new world that could come when cultures mix and mingle. The day's organiser, Roundhouse Outreach officer Christina Coker, had drawn a wide haul — undoubtedly too wide for comfort — under the broad title 'Outreach'.

Strictly speaking, this involves a programme of events that either take place away from the arts centre (or gallery, theatre or whatever) or are designed in conjunction with new audiences to bring them into the arts venue. It is not easy work, because no two situations are alike and there are few precedents. At the same time, because the work usually goes out into the community, to relatively closed target groups — youth clubs, community centres, etc. — it disappears effectively from the critical stage. This is no good thing, for no one works well in a vacuum. From that point of view alone, the Roundhouse's focus was useful.

The examples cited, too, were on the whole impressive: Trevor Mbatha's account, for instance, of his work at East London's Tom Allen Centre, resulting in an Asian youth film, an old age pensioners' concert troupe, an arts day and a black girls' theatre company in a performance of a play that they themselves had devised; or Hannah Wilmot's description of the way in which Battersea Arts Centre has extended its outreach work to make use of visiting companies (a policy that Dade Krama confirmed had given the group a stimulating range of new audiences). Pauline Downs, of Jackson's Lane Art Reach group, provided an excellent list of hints and guidelines drawn from her group's work in special schools. They were all good, solid examples, augmented by accounts of other venues throughout the country, that justified Ms Coker's call for the day to be one of sharing experiences.

Solid though it was, it was not enough for many in the audience. A restive feeling grew in the circular auditorium — not wholly attributable to the hot film lights that a crew had set up — and a beautiful young woman with the group Danse l'Afrique finally put it into words:

> We outside London have been whipped up to see the Roundhouse as the greatest thing for black arts, but this seminar has been really off the point. There are all sorts of issues — black representation, funding, who defines our arts. I can't see what we're focussing on. What *are* we focussing on?

In the way of conferences, her question wasn't directly answered because another questioner leapt in with an utterly different point and soon it was time for Session Five: an eight-person panel under the general heading 'Development, Initiatives and Support'.

What was the focus? In the way of such things, the final achievement was neither Ms Coker's aim ('to provide a forum for those interested in arts outreach work') nor the desire of her critic and others: information about the Roundhouse. Partly it lay in a simple expression of the breadth and aptitude of black groups and artists now working in the field (far wider than Outreach alone), partly in the themes that, despite the day's structure, did emerge.

It was notable, for instance, how little 'funding' was mentioned as an issue. Usually arts debates are dogged by complaints about it. This one wasn't. The concerns that came up here — in Puresh Bhatt's talk about the Brent youth group, Ankur; in the account of Coventry's Chiaro; from many speakers from the floor — were predominantly of control and self-determination. How could standards rise, an atypical questioner asked Jatinder Verma of Tara Arts, without funding? The reply was characteristically trenchant: Tara had survived for three years without money; if people weren't prepared for that kind of commitment they might as well give up. 'We are an integral part of a wider community struggle for equality of resource and recognition.' Whether the Roundhouse should be the flagship of that struggle is a moot point. 'It should not,' said Ms Coker rightly, 'eclipse the work of other centres and projects up and down the country.' But what the relationship should be was left pending. The day succeeded at least in establishing that it does have a role to play — one which will be explored in the open policy meetings already planned. □

Naseem Khan is on the Roundhouse steering committee, but writes in her personal capacity.

Weekend competition

No 2881 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

If heaven, to one discerning gourmet, was *foie gras* eaten to the sound of trumpets, how might it as succinctly be defined by Margaret Thatcher, John McEnroe, Ken Livingstone, Barbara Cartland or any other present-day notable? Max. five definitions per comper. Deadline 24 July.

No 2878 **Set by Maude Gracechurch**

Learned footnotes to well known lines of poetry, offering new and surprising interpretations.

Report **By Rosie Hughes**

We did begin to *groan*, my loves, at the number of you who'd made the joke about Tennyson's 'woodbine... wafted abroad'. Of course, it was very funny indeed when we heard it back in the fourth form (especially since that was just what we smoked in the toilets at the bottom of the playground) but I don't think it stands for a *lot* of repetition — do you? Eight pounds each for the more 'surprising' footnotes printed below.

She stood breast-high amid the corn[1]

[1] *'Corn' in this context is clearly not Indian Corn* (Zea Mays) *but barley* (Hordeum Vulgare). *Since this plant, before the advent of synthetic fertilisers, would hardly exceed three feet in height, Ruth was evidently less than about four foot, two inches, which raises the interesting possiblity that she was a child bride and Hood's poem an expression of latent paedophilia.*

He was a verray parfit gentil knight[2]

[2] *Parfit = perfid (i.e. perfidious); gentil = gentile. This line shows the preceding passage to be sardonic in intent, and is seen by some scholars as confirming Chaucer's Jewishness. His silence on his racial origin gives credence to this view, since Jews had been proscribed since 1290. A known spy, he may have been a double agent working for German Jewry.*

NOEL PETTY

Not now, sweet Desdemona, some other time.[3]

[3] *Although this comes* before *the great temptation scene, Shakespeare's audience would be quick to catch the proleptic force of hearing, as it were, 'Not now, sweet Desdemona,* s'mother *time.' This at a stroke disposes of Othello's later statement that he was 'one not easily jealous'.*

R. ROSSETTI

Some day my Prince will come.[4]

[4] *Eponymous first line of a popular 20th-century song. Various glosses have been offered. The most generally accepted view is that, women being still the subordinate sex at that time, criticism of the dominant group had to be heavily camouflaged: thus, a message of dissatisfaction with a partner's potency is delivered in the politically acceptable guise of romantic heterosexual yearning.*

ANN DEUTSCH

And the tedding [5]and the spreading of the straw for the bedding.

[5] *Tedding: seating of a teddy bear in a prominent position by the bed. (Hilaire Belloc's affection for teddy bears was shared by other poets, including Sir John Betjeman.)*

KATIE MALLETT

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Weekend Crossword 1485

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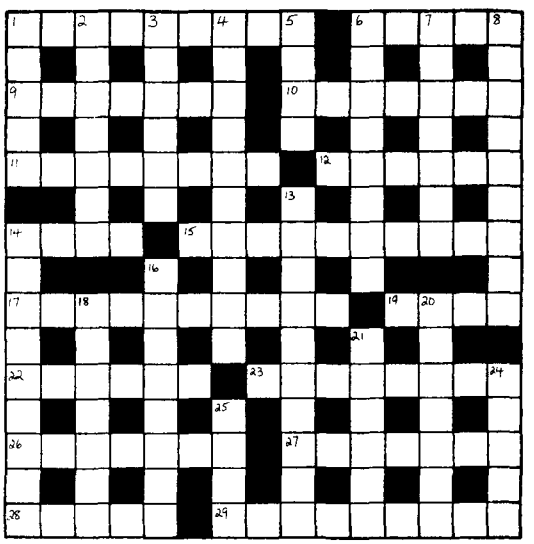


Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

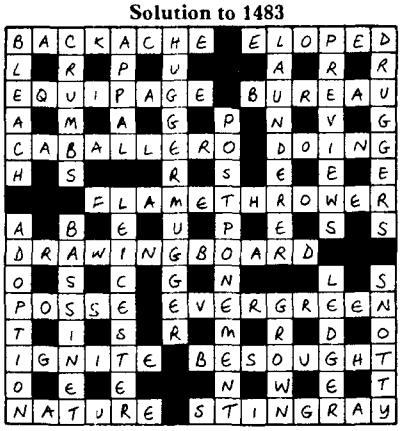
1. Party with makers of fashion or those who are devoted to their pets (9)
6. Remove clothing from inside baggage (5)
9. Linguist whose unusual bias is in a non-scientific subject (7)
10. Maintains the paper exists in the possession of the thing in question (7)
11. Possibly I am frail although unceremonious (8)
12. Place of amusement which provides me with a bit of wickedness in company (6)
14. Sign for money (4)
15. Relationship which could make her hot in temper (10)
17. Move unsteadily outside a vehicle in verse (10)
19. Drink which is all right for the liver? (4)
22. School used to break up on a farm (6)
23. It is sticky when men go into a disreputable place (8)
26. Test by returning tool to workplace (7)
27. If capital were lost the play still established us (7)
28. Notices symptoms (5)
29. Immediately take offence at being in the fold (9)

DOWN

1. Little man whose heart is for the fight? (5)
2. If weight were sacrificed the subject would have to spoil (7)
3. In part I follow a duck or a different bird (6)
4. Additional insurance provided for sportsman (5,5)
5. Certainty produced by the opposite of haphazard means of forecast (4)
6. Is depressed when free rides are given round a holiday resort (8)
7. Gallantry I perform behind the vegetation (7)
8. A wound on the veteran, its contents are lethal (9)
13. Beat harder perhaps when suffering from wear and tear (10)
14. Without equal but not striking? (9)
16. Pole gets stuck into food in caricatures (8)
18. Road not out of order although there is a violent storm (7)
20. Conspicuous branch of medicine without a place of work (7)
21. Woman of iron superior to man (6)
24. Short piece of writing but it is in the press a year (5)
25. A hundred and this amount would be inexpensive (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1483



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LISTINGS

FRI 12 JULY

MANCHESTER Conf. of Socialist Economists AGM on the Service Economy at Manchester Polytechnic. Spkrs/workshops on welfare state, information technology, labour process. Accommo/creche available. **Details: CSE, 25 Horsell Rd, London, N5.**

LONDON 'Social Security Green Paper', 7.30pm, Islington Town Hall, Upper St, N1. Spkrs. incl. Michael Meacher MP, Gordon Brown MP, Brian Abel-Smith, Richard Silburn, Richard Berthoud. Adm. £3 (membs)/£3.50 (non-membs). **Org. Fabian Society 01-222 8877.**

LONDON Opening of Exhibition of Paintings & Prints in aid of Ethiopian Famine Appeal at Bedford Hill Gallery, 30 Bedford Hill, SW12. Adm. by donation. Open Mon-Thurs. 2-6pm. 20% of work sold is donated.

SAT 13 JULY

LONDON 'Benefit for sacked and jailed Miners' 8pm 7 Dials Jazz Club, Earlham St, WC1. 'Happy End', 'roo Tabooga', and spkrs. from NUM Sacked Miners. 01-607 9615.

HAYWARDS HEATH 'The Southern Alternative' — Mid-Sussex Labour Party present a full day festival & rally 9am-11pm Clare Hall, Perrymount Rd, Adm. £3/£2 UB40. Creche/Wheelchair access & handicapped facilities. Evening gala with Ragged Trousered Cabaret, Skint Video, Maria Tolly starts 7.30pm. **Details: Patric Cunnane 01-661 8877 (day) 01-661 7375 (eves) or Christine Tate, Sutton TUC Resource Centre 01-661 7210.**

SUN 14 JULY

LONDON 'World Jewry Today' by Dr. Barry Shenker, Russ Raphael, Avraham Shomroni 8pm 56 Lymington Rd, NW6. **Org. MPAPM, 101 Canfield Gdns, NW6. 01-624 4906.**

NOTTINGHAM 5th Annual Peace Festival 12-8pm Victoria Embankment. supported by 3rd World, Animal Liberation, Ecology grps. **Org. Nottingham CND, 14-18 St. Mary's Gate, Lace Market, Nottingham 581948.**

FRANCE Celebrate Bastille Day 'For a nuclear free & Independent Pacific. **All details: NFIP Support 82 Colston St, Bristol 1. 0272-661221.**

TUES 16 JULY

LONDON Public Meeting on Democracy in the NHS 7.30pm Caxton House, 129 St Johns Way, N19. Spkr. Jed Moran (Health Liaison Officer, Greenwich Council). **Orgs. Islington & Hornsey Health Emergency Campaign/N. London Branch of SHA. Details: Roger Harris 01-272 1772.**

LONDON 'Apartheid Power in S. Africa' by Teresa Smart & Jo Hanlon 7.30pm Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2. Adm. 50p **Details 01-836 1973.**

WED 17 JULY

LONDON 'Socialism & Parliament' — Public meeting of Deptford Campaign Grp. with Bob Clay MP. 8pm Labour Club, Limes Groves (off Lewisham High St). Adm. free, all welcome. **Details: Theo Donnison 01-572 6347/692 4998.**

LONDON 'Botswana — the problems of being a Front Line State' by H. E. Mr Samuel Mpunchane, Botswana High Commissioner in London. 6.30pm Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2. Adm. 50p. **Details: 01-836 1973.**

FRI 19 JULY

NOTTINGHAM Shelter Annual Housing Conference at University **Details/Bkings: Tim Mars 01-633 9377.**

SAT 20 JULY

LONDON Nicaragua — 6th Anniversary of the Revolution — Dayschool & Concert Lambeth Town Hall. 11am-6.30pm Dayschool with workshop, films. Spkrs. incl. Jeremy Corbyn MP, ANC, Valerie Wise GLC. Adm. £2/£1.50 UB40. 8.30pm-midnight Concert with 'African Connection', 'Sonido de Londress'. Adm. £3/£2.50 UB40. **Details Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign 01-359 8982/354 0844.**

GLASGOW Public meeting of Campaign against the Prevention of Terrorism Act. 11am. McLellan Galleries. Creche. **Details: W. of Scotland Campaign against PTA 041-332 1132.**

FORTHCOMING

22 JULY TOOTING BEC 'Trident — Can it help prevent War?' Spkrs. Mike Gapes and spkr. from 'Peace through NATO'. 7.30pm St. Leonards Church Hall, Tooting Bec Gdns, SW16. Wheelchair access, creche (pls. ring). **Details: Lynn or Andy 01-671 0220.**

22 JULY LONDON 'The Amazon Region' — the Last Frontier. Book launch and public meeting with Sue Brandford, author 'The Last Frontier', Marcus Colchester of Survival International, Charles Secrett of Friends of the Earth. 6.30pm Seminar Rm. ICA, Nash House, The Mall, SW1. Adm. Free. **Details: Jacki Heppard 01-387 8466.**

24 JULY LONDON Benefit for Dr Maire O'Shea 8pm-midnight Irish Centre, Murray Street, NW1. Music by Illegal Assembly. Bar until 11.30pm. Adm. £2/£1 UB40. **Org. Camden Campaign Against the PTA 01-772 4226.**

26-28 JULY BATTERSEA 'The Future of Black Performing Arts in Britain — equal opportunities or new direction?' 3-dy forum at Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, SW11. **Details: 01-223 8413.**

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BARBICAN THEATRE
RED NOSES by Peter Barnes "Just the thing if you're dying for a laugh" D Mail 12, 13, 26, 27 July
HAMLET 17-20, 24, 25 July
THE PIT
TODAY by Robert Holman — "touching & uniquely haunting" Punch, last performances 21-22 July
THE WAR PLAYS by Edward Bond — Part III from 17 July

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 9629 Until 27 July, 8pm (Mon-Sat plus Sun 21) **BLOOMSBURY FESTIVAL — Three Weeks of New Music.**

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'Pravda — A Fleet Street Comedy', 'Coriolanus'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'Wild Honey'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

Poetry

POETRY NOW magazine. Issue 4 out now: poems by Adrienne Rich, Raymond Carver, Medbh McGuckian, Ken Smith, Matthew Sweeney. From Scotswood, South Park, Sevenoaks, Kent. £2.20 for sample copy, £8 for four-issue subscription.

MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: s.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 14 July 8 p.m. Informal Q/A Meeting. 'Sleep and Dreams'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

JEWISH TERRORISM
IN ISRAEL AND THE
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Professor Jonathan Frankel — leading PEACE NOW activist

7.30pm, Thurs. 18 July
University London Union
Malet Street, London WC1

Adm. Non members £3.50, members £2, UB40 £1

Organised by: British Friends of Peace Now

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IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover St, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

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COURSES

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CARING HOMES wanted for four six-week old kittens. Two female tabbies, one black and one black & white males. Tel. Catherine 01-737 5678 (home) 01-485 8792 (work).

HAPPY NIGHTS snoring remedy. Certain relief, cure likely. Agbarne. Box (23)0952.

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over fifties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London N5 2DB.

HEARTSEARCH

A BUSY, cognitive divorcee, elicits fortyish goddess, hankering in July kindly lover. Might nonconformity occasion permanent quest respectability, Surrey? Tacit understanding venture worthy (xxx) yours zestfully. Box (27)1126.

ADVENTUROUS FEMALE graduate, 41, pacifist, vegetarian, non-smoker, enjoys music, travelling, countryside, green politics, books. Needs attractive, intelligent, affectionate, younger man. N. Wales/anywhere. Photo appreciated. Box (28)1164.

AFFECTIONATE MALE, 34, platonically tied, living Reading, Berkshire. I'm tall, bearded, non-smoker, seeking lady friend, for discreet, sensuous meetings, mornings, afternoons or evenings. Box (28)1171.

ARE YOU a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARE YOU tall, sensitive, intelligent, well-travelled? Woman, late 40s, London based, seeks country-loving male friend, perhaps located in the West Country. Box (28)1168.

ATLANTIC COAST, FRANCE. Fellow London-based 'Heartsearchers' sought, to share s/c. holiday, Aug./Sept. Attractive socialists, n/s, 30-50, fun. Write with phone, details, quickly. Box (28)1175.

ATTENTION ALL professional gentlemen aged 50+, Intuition Dating Agency have lots of intelligent, attractive women of all ages wanting friendship, romance and marriage. Free details: P.O. Box 482, London NW10 2AW. 01-965 6136. London + South East only.

ATTRACTIVE MALE, 22, civil servant/trade unionist, seeks sincere female friend. Enjoys trendy pubs & clubs, concerts, politics, cinema & dining out. Yorkshire. Box (28)1147.

A WARM, attractive graduate woman, mid 40s, div., home-loving, seeks unattached, professional man for developing relationship. Interests: family life, music, countryside. I am secure financially, have a beautiful home and interesting career, but lack a close relationship with a man. London home. Box (26)1073.

BUSY, PROFESSIONAL woman, 50, widow, slim, attractive, interested: arts, countryside, travel, seeks positive, intelligent and affectionate male of similar age. Oxford area. Box (28)1161.

GAY GUY, 29, graduate, interests: cinema, literature, music, seeks sincere relationship (over 21), West Yorks area. Box (28)1145.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

DIVORCEE, SOCIALIST, graduate (nearly) free family responsibilities, plans indulging fondness travel, countryside, theatre, books, music, conversation, politics; wants compatible partner, under 56, preferably tall. Box (28)1162.

ENGLISH BACHELOR, youngish 45, own house pleasant London suburb — Harrow Hill — seeks and invites shy, reserved, young bisexual lady, any nationality, for correspondence, Saturday or Sunday afternoon walks London area, friendship. Box (28)1153.

FEMALE, NON-GRAD., non-political, attractive, retiring caring profession, hopes for committed relationship, seeks tallish, sensitive male catalyst, for love, share/care and mutual enhancement of life. Box (28)1155.

LITERARY WOMAN, 38, imaginative, humorous, sincere, feminist, seeks thoughtful, creative, emotional, robust, professional man, late 30s/40s, academic/writer/other artist/American? West Yorkshire/nearby. Box (28)1179.

LIVELY, ARTICULATE & petite lady, 40, seeks caring & interesting man for mutual enjoyment of life. Own interests include: music, conversation, the countryside. Chilterns area. Box (28)1177.

LIVELY, ATTRACTIVE woman, 39 — and getting younger each year — seeks easy-going man to spend time with. Many interests and looking for more. London. Box (27)1131.

NEVER MIND the mortgage, forget about the rates, reckless, rebellious, radical female 42, seeks male socialist to run away with. Box (28)1148.

NEW YORK man, 40s, university degree in British literature, pro-CND, politics and arts enthusiast, seeks clever, witty, sophisticated female friend, 30-50. Box (28)1151.

NURSE (ALSO sophisticated lady!) — 40 — seeks company of gentleman, preferably in South Wales or Bristol area. Box (28)1150.

OLDER, PRESENTABLE bachelor — refrainer tobacco, meat, alcohol — cyclist, fond children, choral/folk singing, talking, countryside, seeks peace-loving woman friend. Box (28)1152.

PRESENTABLE, TALL early 50s, divorcee, S. Bucks home, middle-brow interests, seeks unattached, warm male, with a view to developing loving partnership. Box (26)1089.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIST, late thirties, caring, humorous, interests varied, enjoys travel, theatre, wine evenings, seeks male of similar disposition. W. Midlands. Box (28)1159.

QUIET, REFLECTIVE, occasionally mysterious woman, 25, wondering if she's on the wrong Planet, seeks thoughtful, thirtyish man in similar predicament. Yorkshire. Box (28)1146.

SCIENTIST, LONDONER, Continental background, 50s, tall, non-smoking, Jewish, wishes to meet lady to share his interests, travels. Box (27)1120.

SEMI-DETACHED, TALL, attractive, mercurial man, 40s, seeks attractive, tallish, Junoesque woman, 25-40, for uncomplicated, affectionate relationship. Oxford area. Box (28)1176.

SENSITIVE, SENSUAL, socialist, seeks similar soulmate, man, 35. Considers important: friendship, arts, humour, happiness, and much more. Needs a caring inamorata. North East. Box (28)1163.

STEVE, YOUNG 37, long divorced, loves cinema, arts, walking, sport, travel, seeks happy, attractive girl, 25-35, for pursuit of mutual pleasure. Cheshire/North West. Box (28)1154.

UNATTACHED WOMAN, 45, wishes to meet accomplished gentleman, essentially kind and understanding. Interests: painting, music, dancing. Age maybe unimportant. Box (28)1178.

UNIVERSITY LECTURER, 30, PhD, Oxbridge background, with varied interests, needs a lady for relationship, friendship and marriage. Glasgow-based temporarily. Box (28)1167.

VIVACIOUS FEMALE, 37, 5'3", blonde. Have been working overseas professionally for 10 years. Many wide, varied interests: reading, theatre, music, current issues, swimming, walking, tennis. Am 2001 type Catholic. Seeking to meet similar minded male. No preconceived ideas as to age, religion etc., but sense of humour essential. Box (27)1130.

WOMAN, 33, quite ordinary, working in a caring profession, living NW London, seeks a man with whom to share life's ups and downs. Photo please. Box (28)1149.

WRITER/DIRECTOR, 34, seeks actress/personal assistant for Community Theatre Company. Warm, lasting relationship — wit, honesty, curry, spontaneity, Brecht, radicalism, cricket, cuddles essential. Box (28)1160.

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